

CHRISTIAN COURIER

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A look at Celtic Christianity
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Happy anniversary?
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56th year of publication

Religious leaders endorse interfaith statement calling for a faith-rooted response to terrorism

CC Staff

WASHINGTON, D.C. — As a week of national shock and grief, in wake of the Sept. 11 attacks, moved into its third day, more than 100 American religious leaders of all major faith groups — including Christian, Jewish and Muslim — released a comprehensive statement on terrorism that recommends a resolute response guided by the wisdom of religious faith.

Appeal for sober restraint

Signers, who gave their personal endorsement, include the heads of denominations, national and regional religious organizations and parachurch groups; local pastors and rabbis; and theologians and professors from all parts of the United States, reports the Washington-based Sojourners agency.

The statement offered words of

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BAPTIST PRESS

A Nashville, Tenn., resident donates blood — as have many other Americans and Canadians — to help victims of the terrorist attacks.

consolation to the families of the victims, and an appeal for "sober restraint" to citizens reeling in the

wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon

in Washington, D.C.; and the related crash of a hijacked jetliner in Pennsylvania.

"Let us deny them (the terrorists) their victory, by refusing to submit to a world created in their image," the signers argue, adding: "We must not allow this terror to drive us away from being the people God has called us to be." The message also warns that innocent Americans who share the terrorists' ethnicity, national origin or religion should be protected from indiscriminate reprisal or acts of violence.

Test of national character

Terming the aftermath of the attacks a "test of national character," the statement calls for citizens to rededicate themselves to the vision of "community, tolerance, compassion, justice, and the sacredness

of human life, which lies at the heart of all our religious traditions."

The document was developed in consultation with Jewish, Muslim and Christian clergy, and circulated for signature by Rev. Jim Wallis, Call to Renewal and Sojourners; Dr. Robert W. Edgar, National Council of Churches; Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, Reformed Church of America; Rabbi David Saperstein, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism; and Dr. Ron Sider, Evangelicals for Social Action. They invited others to join them in personally endorsing the document, and more than 100 responded within the first 24 hours. Signers included Rev. Peter Borgdorff, executive director of ministries for the Christian

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Bible translation experiment begins in Papua New Guinea

Alan Doerksen

PAPUA NEW GUINEA — Three years ago, a tsunami (tidal wave) wiped out the village of Arop, on the north coast of Papua New Guinea, killing more than 1,000 people. Two Wycliffe Bible Translators, John and Bonnie Nystrom, returned to find their house gone and one co-worker dead. But since that disaster, the Nystroms have resumed their work and are now embarking on a new experiment: starting several translations at the same time.

Recovering from deadly wave

In August 1998, Bonnie Nystrom told *Christian Courier* the tsunami and its aftermath were having a devastating effect on the local people. "Things will not be 'normal' for a long time, perhaps years. So many children were lost. The Arops will have to develop an

entirely new way of life. Their livelihood came from the lagoon. It is no longer accessible to them. They will have to choose new leaders and a new place to live."

The original Arop village was located on a spit of sand between a lagoon and the ocean. After that village was destroyed, the Arop people built a new village inland, in September 1999.

Now, three years after the deadly wave, John Nystrom reflects on the major changes that have happened with translation work and with the Arop people: "Before the tsunami, we were working toward finishing Acts. We had published Genesis and Mark. During our furlough, the translators had also drafted Matthew, Luke, John, Revelation, and a large portion of the Old Testament....

"After the tsunami, we had to get our rebuilding done first. Then



John Nystrom does Bible translation work in Papua New Guinea.

we and the Arop team started talking about helping the other language groups in the area rather than trying to finish the Arop translation. We agreed as a team that we wanted to do that. So we have

mostly been working on getting that project going."

Translating six languages

The Nystroms and their co-workers are breaking new ground for Wycliffe by starting several new translation projects at the same time. "We have changed from a single-language translation team to one that is trying to do translations targeting six languages and three more dialects," explains Nystrom.

One of the Nystroms' biggest challenges is "co-ordinating this nine-translation team. We are experimenting with a different way of doing the translation and training new translators."

The Nystroms ask for prayer as they work on this experiment. "If we continue at our current pace, we won't start translation work in

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News

Faith leaders unite for statement against terrorism

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Reformed Church.

The statement, "Deny Them Their Victory: A Religious Response to Terrorism," follows:

Deny them their victory

"We, American religious leaders, share the broken hearts of our fellow citizens. The worst terrorist attack in history that assaulted New York City, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania, has been felt in every American community. Each life lost was of unique and sacred value in the eyes of God, and the connections Americans feel to those lives run very deep. In the face of such a cruel catastrophe, it is a time to look to God and to each other for the strength we need and the response we will make. We must dig deep to the roots of our faith for sustenance, solace, and wisdom.

"First, we must find a word of consolation for the untold pain and suffering of our people. Our congregations will offer their practical and pastoral resources to bind up the wounds of the nation. We can become safe places to weep and secure places to begin rebuilding our shattered lives and communities.



Firefighters work diligently to rescue victims of the Sept. 11 assault on the World Trade Center.

AP PHOTO/JON LABRIOLA

Our houses of worship should become public arenas for common prayer, community discussion, eventual healing, and forgiveness.

"Second, we offer a word of sober restraint as our nation discerns what its response will be. We share the deep anger toward those who so callously and massively destroy innocent lives, no matter what the grievances or injustices invoked. In the name of God, we too demand that those responsible for these utterly evil acts be found and brought to justice. Those culpable must not escape accountability. But we must not, out of anger and

vengeance, indiscriminately retaliate in ways that bring on even more loss of innocent life. We pray that President Bush and members of Congress will seek the wisdom of God as they decide upon the appropriate response.

Deep, profound questions

"Third, we face deep and profound questions of what this attack on America will do to us as a nation. The terrorists have offered us a stark view of the world they would create, where the remedy to every human grievance and injustice is a resort to the random and

cowardly violence of revenge—even against the most innocent. Having taken thousands of our lives, attacked our national symbols, forced our political leaders to flee their chambers of governance, disrupted our work and families, and struck fear into the hearts of our children, the terrorists must feel victorious.

"But we can deny them their victory by refusing to submit to a world created in their image. Terrorism inflicts not only death and destruction but also emotional oppression to further its aims. We must not allow this terror to drive

us away from being the people God has called us to be. We assert the vision of community, tolerance, compassion, justice, and the sacredness of human life, which lies at the heart of all our religious traditions. America must be a safe place for all our citizens in all their diversity. It is especially important that our citizens who share national origins, ethnicity, or religion with whoever attacked us are, themselves, protected among us.

Shattered illusion

"Our American illusion of invulnerability has been shattered. From now on, we will look at the world in a different way, and this attack on our life as a nation will become a test of our national character. Let us make the right choices in this crisis: to pray, act, and unite against the bitter fruits of division, hatred, and violence. Let us rededicate ourselves to global peace, human dignity, and the eradication of injustice that breeds rage and vengeance.

"As we gather in our houses of worship, let us begin a process of seeking the healing and grace of God."

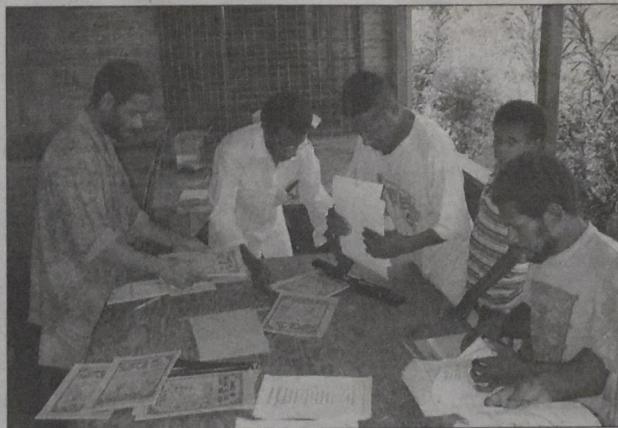
Translators help tidal wave victims face huge lifestyle change

... continued from page 1

the last language in PNG until around 2075. Our grandchildren will be retiring by then! But our goal now is to get translation work started in the last language in PNG that needs it by 2025, around the time Bonnie and I should be retiring. Only a miracle-working God can do this....

"We also have to make decisions about how many translators each language group should appoint. If you have too many in a group, it's hard to come to agreement on things. If you have too few and lose one or two, you may have to start training a whole new team. There are also practical implications that come into play when you have to find a place for them all to sleep.... We would especially like to see the coastal language groups agree to use the same symbols for the same sounds."

Nystrom explains that native Arop translators are "very interested in getting more training themselves and in taking on more responsibilities for teaching and training the new translators for these other language groups." He reports that the Nystroms' supervisors are "very enthusiastic and encouraged us to proceed with our plans.... We have some ideas on how we can help all these



Native Papua New Guineans help with Bible translation work.

languages at one time, but we are sailing in uncharted waters as we try to do a translation project that is different from anything that's been done in Papua New Guinea in the past....

"Bonnie keeps telling people that our experience since the tsunami has been like the disciples and their five loaves and two fish: God is asking us to do something we don't have the resources for, but He keeps giving the resources.... We don't know what will happen next, but we know the Lord does know."

Huge change in lifestyle

Life has changed a lot for the Arops, according to Nystrom. "The Arops have moved inland about six miles on ground that they own," he writes. "This is their own traditional ground. The old beach location of the village was no longer a viable place to live for several reasons. For one thing, there are several hundred people buried there. The sand spit that the village was on used to be 100 metres wide. Now it is only about 50 metres wide and much of it is too low because so much sand was washed

away. So there is very little space to build there. Many people are afraid to live there.

"One big difference is that the two parts of the village are now farther apart. The two western clans used to live very close to the rest of the clans when they were on the beach.... Now you have to walk about 40 minutes across a swamp.

"A big disadvantage to living inland is increased malaria rates because of less wind and more standing water. Malaria rates are just statistics, unless your baby is one of the numbers.

"In terms of daily life, there is a huge difference between living on the beach and living in the bush. Fishing is women's work and gardening is men's work. So in the old village on the beach, the women were close to their fishing in the lagoon, but men had a long way to walk to their gardens, up to 1.5 hours. Now it's the other way around. People used to live on the beach and camp in the bush by their gardens for a few days to a few weeks when they needed to have concentrated time to work on their gardens. Now ... people live in the bush and camp for a while on the beach, catching and smoking fish.

"A woman who wants to go fishing has to plan ahead now; it is

a day-long outing. They don't take small children with them in their canoes as much either, because it's such a long walk. So now grandma gets more opportunities to look after the kids while mom goes fishing.

"The village is ... established now. Most of the churches have rebuilt their buildings, the community school is built, and everyone has a place to live."

The Arop people have reacted in several ways to the disaster and its aftermath, he observes. "People vary in how they have dealt with the grief, of course. Some blame God, some blame the spirits, and some praise God for saving their lives. One of my friends was so distraught over his son's death in the tsunami that he committed suicide a couple months later.

"Another of my friends responded quite differently. He lost his wife and unborn child in the tsunami and was left with six kids. He married a woman whose husband was killed in the tsunami. She had six kids so they now have 12 together.... This is a more typical situation."

Some Arop people have become Christians since the tsunami, says Nystrom. "There is a new openness to the gospel in the surrounding area."

News/Politics

Letters to God

The following students at Beacon Christian Elementary Schools, in St. Catharines, Ont., expressed their feelings and thoughts in a letter to God on September 11, 2001, the day terrorists attacked the U.S.A. and shocked the world.

Dear God,

So many terrible things have happened this week. We now realize how many victims there are: young children, old men, old women, and just everyday citizens who were either injured or killed. We now turn to you, Lord, for help, comfort and safety. Please, help everyone who has suffered or has lost a loved one. Bless those who are stuck in airport terminals

or who fear more attacks. Please, help them not to be afraid.

We pray that you comfort the families who will not be watching TV with their parents, or those who will not be sitting down to supper with their children.

As you say in your Word, Lord, "I will turn their mourning into gladness; I will give them comfort and joy instead of sorrow" (Jeremiah 31:13). Please, be with these people and comfort them.

Alex Windsor, Grade 8

Dear God:

This week has been very hard for the world. Many people were injured and many more died. After this attack we don't feel safe. We can still picture the airplane

crashing. We see how dangerous the world really is.

Please, bring peace and safety back. Help everyone know that fighting and destroying is wrong, and isn't the answer. Be with the rescuers and firefighters as they are helping. Thank you that the world reacted so quickly in helping out and showing great concern.

Kristin Westerhof, Grade 8

Dear Lord Jesus,

It is so frustrating to see so many deaths. We just want to cry out: "Why?" Why have you done this, Lord? Where are you? Why did you let something so tragic happen to the people you've created? Who would want to kill so many people? Help us, Lord.

David T. Koyzis



Principalities & Powers

David T. Koyzis

The impact of evil

As I write, it is not quite a day after the horrific terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Normally it's not wise to write about something so soon after it has occurred. Readers of this column will have the advantage over me of knowing what has transpired in the days and weeks following this watershed event. Accordingly, I shall not attempt to analyze its meaning and possible significance. Instead, it seems in order to reflect on the nature of evil in the human heart and its continuing impact in the political realm.

The modern and postmodern mind are averse to the language of sin. Why? Simply because the very notion of sin assumes that there is a transcendent order that has been violated in some fashion — that we are ultimately responsible to God and have failed in our responsibilities to both him and our fellow human beings. It means that our own desires and aspirations are not the final word. Yet when confronted with such obviously awful events as the Columbine shootings, the Oklahoma City bombing, and now the September 11 "attack on America," the media — dominated as they are by a secular mindset — have to grapple with a reality that their worldview cannot adequately account for.

Needed — a cure

One of the most frequent ways of trying to grasp such acts of terror is to appeal to the language of sickness and therapy. After every similar occurrence, the pundits ask themselves how it could have been prevented. The assumption is that, in our quest to conquer nature — and even human nature — it is a matter of finding and applying the proper forms of therapy to "cure" people of their psychological dysfunctions.

If a teen has murdered several of his classmates, it is because he is troubled — "troubled" meaning that he is suffering from the possible effects of economic disadvantage, of insufficiently skilled teachers who failed to intervene early enough, or from that universal explanatory malady: lack of self-esteem.

Similarly, if a terrorist murders thousands of

innocent victims, it is because he himself is a victim of any of a number of unfavorable circumstances. If we could somehow alter those circumstances, then we might be able to prevent future acts of terrorism.

No punishment

Unfortunately, it is not as simple as that. One of the principal defects of the secular mind-set is that it inevitably oversimplifies an exceedingly complex reality. It does so furthermore by robbing the human person of genuine responsibility for his or her actions. Criminals are deemed, explicitly or implicitly, to be little better than beasts, reacting almost instinctively to various stimuli in their environment. And if this is the case, then the only way to approach such people is, not to punish them, but to administer some form of therapy that would heal them of their dysfunction.

Within this therapeutic worldview it is difficult to make sense of justice. After all, the very notion of justice assumes human responsibility for actions. It assumes that people are capable of making choices about what is right and wrong and that they can be held accountable for these choices. And if human beings are indeed responsible, it means that committing an unjust act calls for some form of recompense — even punishment — to re-balance the scales of justice.

A hunger for justice that shrinks from speaking of such recompense risks degenerating into mere sentimentalism. A genuine justice acknowledges that human beings are responsible for their actions and treats them accordingly.



David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario, and has great respect for a psychotherapy that understands its own limitations.

There are so many things we want to ask even though we know that all this really is in your hands and that you know what you are doing, and, though it is hard to understand why you let this happen, we know that all this will work out for the good of those who love you and keep your commands.

Ann Elise Teeuwsen, Grade 8

Descriptive paragraph:

I'm really sad for what happened. There are so many questions to ask. Who did it? Why did they do it? Are some people still

Cheryl Vink, Grade 7

CRWRC responds to terrorist attacks

CC Staff

BURLINGTON, Ont. — In the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the U.S., the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) is preparing a response to help the survivors of this tragedy and the victims' families.

Ellis Wykstra, CRWRC Regional Manager, was just outside New York City at the time of the attacks on the World Trade Center, reports CRWRC's Burlington office. Soon afterward, Wykstra was working with other Christian non-profit groups to develop a Church World Service (CWS) response to this disaster. CRWRC will play a key role in this combined response.

Initially, CRWRC expects to provide emotional and spiritual support to survivors of the attacks and to the families of victims. Teams of trained chaplains and counsellors are being alerted and will be mobilized.

CRWRC co-operates with many relief networks. As further details emerge, CRWRC will participate in appropriate collaborative responses.

CRWRC is a Christian,

non-profit organization that provides a ministry of development, relief, and justice education to people in need around the world. CRWRC, an agency of the Christian Reformed Church, is currently active in 30 countries around the globe, and has an international reputation for "helping people help themselves."

Financial donations towards CRWRC's efforts can be given online at www.crwrc.org. You may also give your credit card donation by calling 1-800-730-3490. Cheques can be written to CRWRC and earmarked "Survivor's Fund". These should be sent to: CRWRC, 3475 Mainway - P.O. Box 5070 STN LCD 1, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8

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(to one address)

Guest Editorial

May God save our world from hatred

Bert Witvoet

As former editor of *Christian Courier*, I decided to pitch in at the CC office after editor Harry der Nederlanden had undergone an operation on his colon and needed time to recuperate. It was Tuesday, September 11, when I stepped into the familiar surroundings and plunked myself down behind my former desk. Little did I realize that my first day back would have a flavor very different from any other day I have ever spent at the office. After only one hour in the office, we heard the horrifying news of terrorist attacks on the United States. The news became grimmer as the morning went along. We could not believe what we heard.

Like so many others, we found it hard to concentrate on our work because of what was taking place across the border. This was evil. This was so destructive. This was the kind of day one will always remember. Where were you when four planes were hijacked and the World Trade towers were flattened, the Pentagon was damaged and thousands of people lost their lives in the most horrible way?

In my heart, I heard the world cry out to God. "God, please save us! Please help us! There is so much hatred here. God, have mercy!"

Good versus evil

Reactions to the attack came in from all over the world. Most western leaders saw this well-planned

act of aggression as an attack on freedom and democracy. President Bush spoke of it as an attack on freedom-loving people all over the world. He predicted that "this will be a monumental struggle of good versus evil, but good will prevail."

How does one respond to this terrible demonstration of hatred as a Christian? I asked myself. Are we dealing with an attack on freedom, and is the struggle one between good and evil? You want to join in with the chorus of western leaders. To abstain from joining in almost sounds as a betrayal to our American friends and to western democracies. However, nothing that I read in the papers or heard on the news latched onto what I felt in my heart. I knew that what was happening had to do with a struggle between spiritual powers, but how does one avoid spiritualizing this thing?

At the time of this writing, we don't know yet who is behind this act of terrorism, but almost everybody suspects that it has something to do with the Middle East situation. There are indications that the terrorists spoke Arabic and were Muslims. Those who read into this event the end of times might even point to the Scriptures to indicate that the last struggle will take place in the Middle East.

Overwhelming sadness

But I was not contemplating the end of time when I tried to digest the news stories. The first thing I felt was a terrible sadness. The thought of all the human suffering unleashed on our American neighbors made me almost physically sick to my stomach. How can anyone absorb the terrible experience of a loved one dying in the hijacked airplanes or the collapsing buildings?

The next thing I experienced was a thought that this is much more complex than a simple matter of evil versus good. We heard that Palestinians in Israel camps were celebrating, and, somehow, I was not surprised. I didn't think of these people as sick people. I reminded myself that these people have been in camps for more than 50 years, and they attribute this dreadful situation to the uncaring interference by western nations. These Palestinians hate the west, hate America, because of their own suffering. Where is the justice for them?

What if we look at this world situation in terms of love and hate, rather than good and evil, I asked myself. Yes, the Palestinians hate us. But have we loved them? What love is it that uses force to dispossess Palestinians and either expel them or herd them into camps? Is Zionism really of God, never mind whether it fulfills prophecies. We are not called to fulfil prophecies but to do justice and love mercy.

Communal guilt

I am not suggesting that America should not punish the acts of terrorism that took place on September 11. I believe that all peace-loving nations should support a just counter action. What happened in New York, Washington and Pittsburgh needs a strong response that sends a clear message that we cannot tolerate such devilish actions. But I am thinking of the bigger picture. What have we done as western nations since World War II? How have we earned some of the hatred that Muslims and Arabs feel for us?

And I don't want to single out the United States

even though the terrorists have singled them out so many a time. All nations on this earth are tainted by domestic and international policies that are self-serving before they are caring. We western nations especially have worshipped and continue to worship at the altar of consumerism and economic exploitation at the expense of our neighbors and the environment. We have tried to atone for humanity's crime against the Jews (the Holocaust) by committing a crime against the Palestinians. Our definition of freedom is skewed our way – freedom to prosper as westerners.

I hate what happened at the Race conference in Durban (hypocrisy is rampant among tin-pot dictators), and I hate what happened in New York, Washington and Pittsburgh. But I can't join the rallying cry that we, who stand for the good, must defeat our enemy, who stands for evil.

Psalm 2 tells me that "the kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One." The struggle is between God's kingdom and Satan's kingdom. I am not suggesting that New York is Babylon, but we do read in Revelation 18 that the nations of the world have drunk the maddening wine of Babylon the Great and that this includes the merchants who "grew rich from her excessive luxuries." If you think I have no business making connections between these passages and what happened on September 11, I will ask you, when do we start making connections?

Assuming that you agree with me, how do we explain that to a world that engages in self-serving power struggles? And how do we escape judgment for our own complicity? The problem with this world is that there is a deficiency of love and justice.

Lord, help this poor world live by your love command in the power of Jesus!

Update from Harry der Nederlanden

I wrote this on what I hope will be my last day in Hotel Dieu. It has been a two-week honeymoon with God. That's what Calvin Seerveld called Israel's sojourn in the desert. My honeymoon, thank God, was considerably shorter. But it had some of the main ingredients: a strong sense of dependence on God and his nearness; moments when I was awash with gratitude; broken by moments of anxiety and despair when things didn't "take" as expected, and tubes had to be reinserted; times of painful hard-slogging; times of quiet; times of wonder at this marvellous web of science, high-tech and human dedication that ministered to my needs.

But I wasn't in a desert, was I? I was sustained not just by God but by intricate human communities – my family, my church, this (Catholic) hospital, a vast medical establishment, OHIP, a government that strives to make all this available to all. All these, too, are gifts of the Spirit.

I thank God with all my heart that by this timely intervention I may anticipate more time with my family and friends, more time to enjoy the beauties of his world, more time to write, to praise him, more time...

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Opinion

Love and marriage, like horse and carriage, have their moments

Harry der Nederlanden

A recent story posted by a Christian news service reported that a Democratic senator in the U.S., in opposing Bush's nominee for a position in the Department of Health and Human Services, argued that marriage is bad for women. His point is not totally off the mark. Some marriages have been hard on women. There are those who portray marriage as an institution that does little more than institutionalize the suppression of women. You don't have to be anti-marriage to admit that some are better dissolved or never entered at all.

Locked in abusive situations

In the not too distant past, governments enforced laws that kept women locked in abusive situations their entire lives. That was unfortunate. Since that time, we have passed laws that have made it too easy to walk away from a marriage. That's not much better. It has become clear to all but the most doctrinaire that easy divorce has wreaked havoc in the lives of children and created a social disaster.

Christians are right in celebrating the benefits of marriage and opposing the radical feminist view of it as a prison. But it is dangerous for Christians to generalize and to push for legislation that would pressure women to enter into abusive marriages or to remain in them just because we believe marriage is the normative way to raise children.

The referendum as a tool of democracy

Ron Gray

A dramatic example of the futility of referenda as a means of deciding social policy was New Brunswick's poll on video lottery terminals (VLTs). Voters there narrowly approved retaining VLTs — sometimes called 'the crack cocaine of the gambling industry' — after a massive advertising campaign by the gambling industry threatened them with "increased taxes if VLTs are outlawed."

What the voters apparently didn't understand (because it was not in the gambling industry's interest to inform them) is that:

(a) money taken out of the economy by gambling is a hidden tax;

(b) to get the amount of money that goes to hospitals from gambling, that "tax" has to be much more than twice as large as a direct tax would be to pay for those services;

(c) a large part of the money that the economy loses to gambling goes out of the province and out of the country, to foreign operators of the industry (and some major gambling businesses are alleged to have Mafia connections);

(d) the social cost in ruined lives, broken homes, and bankruptcies that can be directly attributed to gambling must be borne by all taxpayers and is much more costly, both in money and in human terms, than simply paying the tax bill for medical, educational and sports facilities.

Quebec is still reeling from the news that 31 suicides last year were directly

The above-mentioned news article quotes Amy Desai, a marriage and family analyst for Focus on the Family, who says, "People who are married are far less likely to experience domestic violence than any other relationship." Despite some recent articles claiming that domestic violence is just as prevalent among Christians as elsewhere, married folk seem to be more contented and their relationships less prone to violence.

Solution for couples in poverty

So Desai suggested that marriage can be a solution for couples in poverty. "It helps poor people climb out of poverty," she explained. "We know that married people earn more, they're healthier, physically and emotionally, they're more sexually satisfied, and they're happier." And, I will add, a good marriage is a better environment in which to raise children than a single parent family.

But having said all these things in praise of marriage, Christians are not obligated to portray marriage as a heal-all, as a prescription for all sorts of social and economic ills in each and every case. Governments should not create legal, tax and welfare structures that discourage marriage, but neither should they impose hardships on women who judge that being married to a particular man endangers their lives or those of their children.

The current "culture wars" should not lead Christians to claim too much. Jesus himself recognized the awful brokenness of

attributable to casino gambling and yet the provincial government there is pouring \$200 million of taxpayers' money into the expansion of the Hull casino!

Governments addicted to gambling

Do you know who's really addicted to gambling? Our governments! They're so hooked on having a source of revenue that doesn't look like taxes (even though the money really comes out of taxpayers' pockets and impoverishes the economy), that even deaths can't persuade them to kick the habit!

In cases like this, where a moral issue is at stake, referenda which can so easily be distorted by massive media campaigns are probably the worst possible way of deciding.

There was a good reason why Germany, which had citizen-initiated referenda in the Weimar Republic from 1919, scrapped the idea: they had seen how demagogues can inflame public opinion and manipulate the outcome, and referenda had played a significant role in the Nazis rise to power.

On some issues, the long-established principles of right and wrong bequeathed to our culture by its Christian origins are the only reliable guide to public policy.

Ron Gray is the national leader of the Christian Heritage Party.

human existence when he recognized divorce. He didn't recognize divorce as something good, of course. It isn't a solution to anything; it is a dissolution, a recognition of failure. But faith does not close its eyes to bitter realities, and as Christians we should not promote social policies that do so either.

About buying a new laptop....

I'm writing to complain, dear DELL, not because of your prices (they're swell) but because when I got to the end of my order and moved my cursor to SEND, you stuck in a whopping shipping fee and then more for a regular guarantee.

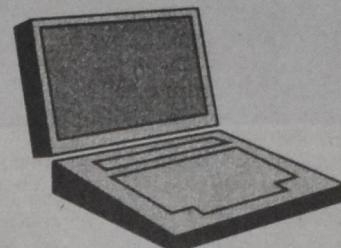
True, it was all in the microscopic print, but your tactics turned my heart to flint; no matter how much you advertise, your sneaky add-ons are not wise.

So I took my business to IBM, which doesn't employ such a stratagem; both shipping and a guarantee are included in the price you see, and right on every ad they say they'll ship it out that very day.

IBM has a tremendous web site that does almost everything just right, but it seems reluctant to tell what it hasn't it cannot sell. And so it let me tick off the days, conceptualize the numerous ways my computer may have gone astray or been lost along the cyberway.

Really, IBM, you call that class? I think it just a little crass not to send me a short letter to tell me that I had better catch on that in cyberspace there is no truth — only grace, and only for the corporate soul which sucks it dry like a cosmic hole.

Harry der Nederlanden



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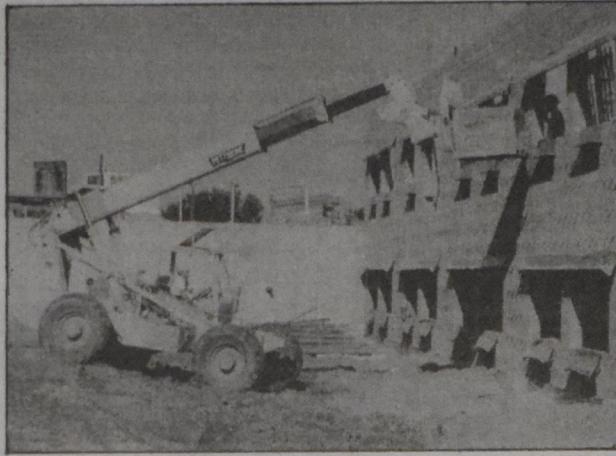
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Education

New buildings and programs in the works at Reformed colleges



CALVIN COLLEGE

A \$25 million expansion is under way at the Calvin College campus.

Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Over the summer months, Christian college campuses are usually quiet places, but new construction, conferences and programs have been in the works at Calvin College, Dordt, King's and Redeemer.

At Calvin College, in Grand Rapids, Mich., a \$25 million expansion of its East Campus is under way, with an expected completion date of September 2002, reports communications director Phil deHaan. The Calvin campus will look significantly different once the DeVos Communication Center and the Prince Conference Center are completed.

Each of the two new buildings promises to add a lot to both Calvin's campus and the Grand Rapids community, writes deHaan. The DeVos Communication Center will house classrooms and office space for the communication arts and sciences department as well as the political science department and the Paul B. Henry Institute for the Study of Christianity and Politics. It also will contain a TV studio, a radio studio, a computer lab and a 150-seat theatre.

The Prince Conference Center will be two buildings connected by an atrium. One building will hold several rooms for meeting space, including a room with seating for up to 400 people. The other building will be a lodging facility with 60 air-conditioned rooms for guests. Much of the conference centre will incorporate Calvin's 40-hectare ecosystem preserve with views of the woods, ponds and trails that make up the preserve.

The Prince Center will help the college deal with a space crunch. While the demand for conferences at Calvin has been increasing,

available space has been decreasing. In the past, the college has provided conference space and accommodation in residence halls on campus. However, as student enrolment increases, this option is no longer available during the academic year.

The two new buildings are being funded by the two largest gifts in the history of Calvin College. Both the Richard and Helen DeVos Foundation and the Edgar and Elsa Prince Foundation committed \$10 million to the projects for a total of \$20 million.

"The DeVos and Prince families are long-time supporters of Christian education," said Calvin College president Dr. Gaylen Byker at the time of the gift (July 1998). "Their support of these two new ventures means a great deal to all of us at Calvin. We are very grateful."

New nursing program

New this fall at Calvin will be the Calvin College Nursing Program. Previously, Calvin and nearby Hope College had a combined nursing program, but this will soon be discontinued, with the last class graduating in 2003, reports Calvin's website. Calvin staff have been busy developing a new curriculum for the program.

"The curriculum that we're putting together will equip our students to provide healthcare in the 21st century," says Calvin nursing professor Mary Molewyk Doornbos. "But it also will benefit all the people our students will partner with as graduate nurses. We have a very strong sense that the work we're doing now will have a long-term impact."

"One of the main reasons for beginning the (Hope-Calvin nursing) program was that at the time neither institution felt like it could

offer such a program on its own," says Calvin academic dean Mike Stob. "By most measures the program has been successful. Hope-Calvin graduates are much appreciated by local employers and the program enjoys a reputation for preparing its students well. However the program has always been a challenge to administer due to the fact that it is run jointly by two colleges. And students have had to make sacrifices too. In the early days of the program vans would shuttle back and forth between Holland and Grand Rapids for classes. Now it's a little better

because we can use distance learning classrooms, but even that represents a compromise from the way both schools prefer to teach their students."

One of the things that will be new to the Calvin program is an increased emphasis on community-based nursing.

The Calvin College Nursing Program will have a hearing on September 19 in Lansing, Mich. before the State Board of Nursing. At that time Calvin hopes to receive permission to develop a Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

Construction at Dordt, Redeemer

Meanwhile, at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa, construction of a new campus centre is "the biggest event right now," says public relations director Norlan De Groot. "We're hoping to get it ready by May."

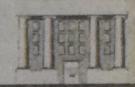
The four-level Campus Center is one of the final buildings to be constructed from a campus development plan designed in 1990 to ensure the campus could accommodate the needs of its students. The new facility will be the hub of

See CONSTRUCTION p. 8...

The end of the carnival

Campus Culture

Peter Schuurman



Who is the Bad Guy?

Wednesday (today) the mayor of New York counseled the dazed populace: "Go outside, go shopping." We decided to organize a prayer service. Both the university and student Presidents made an appearance and gave short speeches, bookended by our prayers: for the victims and their families, for the rescue workers, for the leaders, and for ourselves. "We live in a world where we don't know who the bad guy is," said the university President. "And we don't even know if he is a bad guy."

"Regardless of race, religion or nation, we have a choice," he continued. "A choice to love or hate, to tolerate or respond with revenge, to live up to those ideals that every culture has upheld, or to fall into the depths of our own depravity."

We ended by reading the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, asking for God's help in choosing for the better way. "May I not seek so much to be consoled as to console. Make me a channel of your Peace."

It's too early to say too much about this catastrophic event. But I'm using the book *Jihad Verses McWorld* in a course I hope to teach this fall. Jihad is used in this book not just as a Muslim holy war cry, but to represent all those forces that resist the globalizing influences of American capitalism. It appears that Coke, hamburgers and movies do not entertain multitudes of people with whom we share this planet. They have preferred traditions of their own. Their way of life — or just simple survival — pre-empts a shopping mentality. So rather than plotting revenge or doubling our security and surveillance, we should re-think our international relations. Something has ended. We must change rather than re-trench ourselves in our former bravado.



Peter Schuurman is the Christian Reformed campus chaplain at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont.

Arts/Media

Hollywood's collateral damage

Ron Vandenburg

In the wake of the recent tragedies in both New York and Washington, Hollywood has had to deal with its own damage control. In a society where the action-adventure disaster movie has dominated the box office, film makers and industry watchers are predicting a shift in what the viewing public will tolerate in the future. Says one producer, "When reality imitates art, the action adventure movies aren't in good taste anymore."

The reactions of the eyewitnesses to the American tragedies have been a telling commentary of the impact of disaster movies on our media-dominated culture. Having no reference point to this scale of violence in a modern historical context, those fleeing the World Trade Center and seeing the large plume of smoke could respond to the TV cameras only by saying, "It's like a movie!"

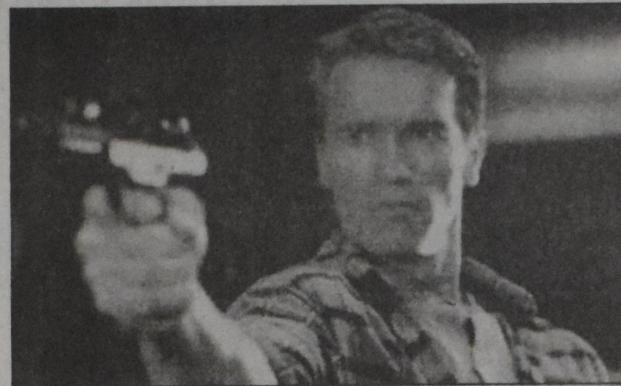
Sure, everything that we saw was like a movie, because the events of that day imitated fiction, not life. Before, we could believe that such a catastrophe could be done only on the screen via the imagination of James Cameron and a bunch of special effects aliens. Sitting in our living rooms, with footage pieced together from a variety of camera angles, we saw the story unfold from the beginning. We watched the falling of towers, so simply, so perfectly, falling on itself. Just like a movie.

What to expect?

In a recent *USA Today* article, Michael Barson, co-author of the book *Red Scared: The Commie Menace in Propaganda and Popular Culture*, believes we will no longer want to see terrorist tales at the movies. "The reason (the disaster) was like watching a movie is because we *did* see this movie," Barson says. "We watched it as *Independence Day*. We watched it as *Air Force One*. To have it actually happen makes everything that preceded it seem irrelevant. It was high entertainment because we thought those famous buildings getting destroyed was impossible."

But historian Mark Carnes, editor of *Past Imperfect: History According to the Movies*, disagrees. "My guess is that Hollywood will, in its ghoulish way, respond by taking us closer and closer to the carnage. And we, in ours, will cringe, and then look back again, relieved that we are mere spectators."

For now, Hollywood is being very careful and pulling anything that refers to terrorists, the World Trade Center or New York itself.



INTERNET PHOTOS COURTESY ALTAVISTA

Jackie Chan (l.) and Arnold Schwarzenegger (above) have appeared in movies related to terrorism which have been put on hold by studios.

Many reversals

It's not hard to see why *Collateral Damage* starring Arnold Schwarzenegger was first to be indefinitely postponed by Warner Bros. According to the publicity on the Internet, in the film, Schwarzenegger plays a firefighter who loses his wife and child in a terrorist bombing. Frustrated with the inability of officials to track down the culprit, the man plunges into the world of international terrorism to hunt the killers down and avenge his family's death. "Warner Bros. Pictures is making an immediate and complete effort to retrieve all outdoor advertising, to pull the Web site and all in-theater advertising, and cancel all radio and television advertising and promotions," studio executives said in a statement.

Big Trouble, a Tim Allen film already heavy in promotion and

due out September 21, has been pulled because of a film sequence with a bomb on an airplane.

Hollywood scripts are being rewritten. In *Nosebleed*, Jackie Chan was to star as a Trade Center window washer who battles terrorists bent on blowing up the Statue of Liberty. That idea has been changed.

For many people, even more, movies will need to be an escape, and so studios have decided that any reference to the recent terrifying events should be edited. In the most recent coming-attractions trailer for the movie *Spider-Man*, the superhero spins a web between the Trade Center towers to foil bank robbers. Columbia Pictures pulled the trailer from theaters Tuesday night, though it can still be found on Internet fan sites. The studio says that the scene was made for the trailer and never intended for the movie, and that any appearance of the buildings will be cut or digitally erased from the final film. The poster, in which the twin towers can be seen reflected in Spider-Man's eyes, will disappear, too.

West Wing

reality

Television, too, has had to alter its plans. Ironically, espionage and fighting terrorists was a major theme for the upcoming season with three shows prominently offering the spy

difficult to imagine that the TV show characters will be business as usual, walking down their busy hallways trading clever written banter.

Accustomed to heroes

Many things will have to change because of September 11, 2001. The type of entertainment Hollywood has to offer may be one of those things. Viewers may not want to see any more disaster movies or action films where the hero fights the terrorist villain. But, it is New York, and Metropolis has always had Superman. We have grown accustomed to seeing the simple man survive what's been thrown at him to emerge victorious or the larger-than-life hero defeat the evil madman.

Hollywood has trained the culture well. Still there are those watching the news hoping for a happy ending with a miracle plot twist. But no director is going to yell, "Cut!" and no special effects crew will set up the next scene, and no caped hero, masked man or martial arts window washer was there to stop the evil.

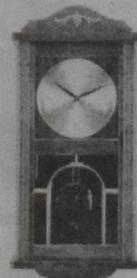
I wonder how long it will be before we see *September 11* coming to a theatre near you.

Ron Vandenburg is a Grade Seven teacher at Beacon Christian Schools in St. Catharines, Ont. He is a writer of drama and a media buff.



Will TV's *The West Wing* (see cast photo above) parallel the reality of the new America in its own plotlines?

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Church

Diaconal Ministries Canada gets new national director

BURLINGTON, Ont. — Diaconal Ministries Canada is delighted to announce that Hans Kater has accepted the position of national director, effective November 1.

Kater brings a wide-ranging work history and a passionate desire to minister with the church to the poor. He has worked for many years as an accountant and tax consultant. During this time, he worked as a deacon with the Christian Reformed Church in Peterborough, and also served on the board of Diaconal Ministries Eastern Canada. *Hans Kater*

In the early 1990s, Kater felt a call to overseas missions, and enrolled at Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Mich. After graduating from Calvin with a Master's degree in Mission and church Growth, Kater and his family served as missionaries with Christian Reformed World Missions in Honduras and Costa Rica. The past two years, he has been the Central American Field Director with World Missions.

Kater brings a strong personal commitment to the Lord, a well-developed sense of holistic ministry, and a desire to strengthen the Canadian church. His strengths in community development, strategic planning, organizational strengthening and financial administration are gifts that will serve Diaconal Ministries Canada well in its development.

Diaconal Ministries Canada is a new national ministry initiative that equips deacons in Christian Reformed Churches in Canada to empower the poor and equip church members to work as compassionate partners with the poor.



DIACONAL MINISTRIES

Construction, constructive conferences at Reformed colleges

...continued from page 6
all student activities at Dordt and the main welcoming centre for the campus.

"After almost three years of planning and concept development it's exciting to see the final component of the campus development plan well underway," says Dordt College President Carl E. Zylstra. A lack of space for student activities and gatherings has made Dordt's library an alternate place for socializing. The centre will restore the library's function as a quiet place for research and study, and allow students ample room to socialize (providing lounge areas, a bookstore, a snack bar, and a game room in the centre) and have access to several offices and services that are currently scattered across the campus.

Fundraising to meet the cost of the new facility is continuing, reports De Groot. Total cost of the project is approximately \$13,850,000 (US) with a \$1 million endowment fund to be established for maintenance purposes. A \$1 million lead gift was pledged by the Peter De Yager family of Hull, Iowa. De Yager is founder and president of the Foreign Candy Company in Hull, and is serving on the national leadership cabinet



Dordt College's new Campus Center under construction.

for fundraising for the Campus Center project.

Growth at Redeemer College

Construction is also happening at Redeemer University College, in Ancaster, Ont. A new outdoor recreation centre featuring tennis and basketball courts has been under construction, and should be ready to use by early fall, says communications director Mark Van Beveren.

The college has also been

Hungarian priest urges Catholic Church to admit Communist past

Stefan J. Bos

BUDAPEST (ANS) — There are new calls for Hungarian Church leaders to publicly admit their alleged co-operation with the former Communist regime as questions are raised about the past activities of the Roman Catholic Church, the country's largest denomination. In a controversial move, Catholic Priest Gyorgy Bulanyi has urged Hungarian Cardinal and Primate Laszlo Paskai, to confess his alleged links with the Communist authorities and the dreaded secret service.

"Now that we are over the system-change, I say that they... should admit what happened," Bulanyi told Hungarian commercial television network TV 2. "I have encouraged Paskai to confess, and he would be glorified by all of Hungarian society," said Bulanyi, who suffered under Communism as the leader of an underground Catholic Church movement.

"We could cleanse all of Hungarian public life (and) the Hungarian Catholic clergy, if a confession were made to the effect

that we danced to the tune of the party-state. But he has not done this..." Bulanyi told TV 2.

Secret documents

Secret service documents, leaked to the media, suggest that even the Vatican no longer considered Paskai suitable to head the Roman Catholic Church in Hungary. They also suggest that the Vatican wanted to replace the Cardinal, soon after the fall of Communism in 1989.

Paskai has refused to discuss the matter in public, and was quoted by TV 2 as saying that the Vatican had banned him from speaking. Hungarian commentators say this is a curious reason as Pope John Paul II recently called upon all Christians to confess their sins before God and the people.

The controversy comes a year after Parliament amended a law that would enable the screening of church officials on their past links with the Communist regime on a voluntary basis. A special panel of judges could already investigate previously politicians, state officials, and media leaders.

About 90 per cent of Hungarians support the screening of church leaders, according to a TV2 poll, although some are treating this apparent public sentiment with caution. Bishop Endre Gyulai said that "those who trust in the Lord God should not have a need for such self-verification" from judges screening them.

"Bishops are appointed and investigated by Rome for a very long time, and Rome is very thoroughly briefed, whether it concerns faith, morals or other matters," he said. "Therefore, in this sense, by the time they reach this point they will already have been vetted to such an extent in the Catholic Church leadership that I personally do not believe such more (screening) to be suitable or important."

But there are few indications that pressure on church leaders to confess will soon disappear in Hungary, where memories of Communism are only slowly fading away among especially the elderly generation.

Stefan J. Bos is Eastern Europe Correspondent for ASSIST News Service.

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Redeemer plans to extend the co-op concept to the sciences, environmental studies, theatre arts and other disciplines.

King's conferences

The King's University College in Edmonton hosted a major conference in May and is gearing up for another one in late September. Community and Technology were the focuses of the May 10-12 conference, at which more than 60 academics from universities, seminaries, Bible colleges and Christian liberal arts colleges joined for three days of discussion of issues such as: How does technology shape educational communities? How do we understand and use technology in ways that reflect Christian faith?

The May conference was organized by the college and With Heart and Mind, which the King's

website explains is a network of academics. Its *raison d'être* is a biennial, national conversation about the work of Christians in public and Christian higher education. WHAM, as it is affectionately called, is focused on faith and learning in Canadian higher education. The last WHAM conference was hosted by Trinity Western University, in Langley, B.C., in 1999, and focused on the theme of "Faith-full Teaching/Faith-full Scholarship."

On September 19 and 20, King's hosted "Where?—Coming Home"—a worldview journey Interdisciplinary Studies Conference, with keynote speaker Richard Middleton — teacher of Old Testament Interpretation at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School in Rochester, N.Y. He has co-authored (with Brian Walsh) *The Transforming Vision: Shaping a Christian World View and Truth is Stranger than it Used to Be: Biblical Faith in a Postmodern Age*. This conference will explore, from a Christian perspective, foundational issues shaping contemporary culture. Middleton will speak on topics such as "Heaven is not my home... but I don't fit in so well here either" and "The challenge of biblical faith in a postmodern age."

Church

Is it too early to call for forgiveness?

Harry der Nederlanden

It is, of course, never too early for us — a secular, consumerism and materialist people — to ask God to forgive us for depending on wealth, technology, weapons, corporations and all sorts of other powers and principalities. Whenever trouble and disaster strike, God's people turn to him to seek his presence. To be close to a holy God, we too must be holy — forgiven.

But those calling for forgiveness in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks are not calling on God but on the victims — the citizens and government of the United States — to forgive the assassins.

I believe such a call to be premature. To call for swift retribution may be dangerous, but to have the first word from the church about this criminal act against a civilian population be a call for forgiveness for perpetrators distorts the biblical message.

God is a God of justice. Jesus Christ died not to eliminate justice but to uphold it.

The gang of terrorists who murdered thousands of people going about their daily lives are not looking for forgiveness. They do not see themselves as guilty before God. They see themselves as heroes and intend to go on doing harm. They are evil men filled with hate for everything we've built and hold dear.

A cancer that must be excised

They are a cancer that must be excised. When my doctor discovered cancer in my body, he did not say, "Be kind to it, and it will be kind to you." To restore me to health, he cut it out.

It is entirely proper for the governments of the world to unite in excising this cancer as swiftly as possible.

For the church to seek to thwart the cry for justice as being more primitive than forgiveness is to do harm to the Gospel.

Of course, the church does well to warn against a generalized hatred for Arabs or Muslims. This is not justice. It may also remind us that some of the hatred directed toward the West is not unjustified.

But the church must not become anti-military by reflex, as if the use of police or military force were always a misuse of power. There are times when a government must act decisively to protect human life, when it must use the weapons of war to oppose international lawlessness and violence. At such times, the government and military must not be made to feel guilty by the church. Our soldiers will be sent in harm's way on our behalf. They, too, must be able to serve as servants of God.

May God bless them and keep them safe. May he give wisdom to our leaders and our generals, that suffering may not be multiplied, but that peace may come.

EFC calls for prayer in response to American crisis

MARKHAM, Ont. — Gary Walsh, president of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) has called Canadians to pray for our stricken American neighbors. "Our friends to the south have experienced a tragedy. I am calling the evangelical community and all Canadians to pray for those whose lives and families have been devastated and for the American nation and their leaders. We need to pray that great wisdom be granted to world leaders at this time as they deal with this devastation," Walsh said, as reported in an EFC press release.

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada is calling the nation to pray for peace in the midst of this current crisis. EFC appreciates all the churches that have opened their doors for prayer, and encourages pastors, churches and groups to hold prayer meetings.

Pray for peace

"We pray first for peace," states EFC. "We pray for wisdom for the world leaders — that they would be wise in their response to the acts of violence. We pray for the families of those who were killed. We pray for all those who have been

Messages of condolence arrive from Russia and Ukraine

Michael Ireland, Chief Correspondent ASSIST News Service

NEW YORK, N.Y. (ANS) — Messages of condolence after Sept. 11's suspected terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in which hundreds, if not thousands, of people perished, have been pouring in from all over the world.

Following an e-mail letter of encouragement from Russian Pastor Igor 'Nikki' Nikitin in mid-September, president of the Association of Christian Churches in Russia, based in St. Petersburg, Russia, the group issued another statement of concern for American Christians and Americans in general.

"We received many letters from the United States that expressed the hurt for the lost, panic and fear as a result of yesterday's terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. But we know that these events are turning our focus to our Lord Jesus Christ. We understand that this is the last call for repentance for all of us," wrote Nikitin.

"Last night we spent time in prayer, sent thousands of e-mails, faxed letters to the governments and presidents of our nations, and comforted the Russian people in America through live television and radio broadcasts," he said.

Day of Prayer in Russia

"First of all, these tragic events have directed us, here in Russia, to call a Day of Prayer for all Christians on behalf of the people in the nation of America. Today thousands of churches throughout the nation will join us in prayer for you, our dear brothers and sisters.

"Secondly, these events are

dislocated by the disruption in air travel. We also pray for the perpetrators of the violence. We pray that God will touch their hearts and that they will turn away from violence. We pray that people's minds and hearts will not turn to violence when faced with violence."

For a quick letter to the editor, please send it by fax to: 905-682-8313, or by e-mail to: ceeditor@aol.com

calling us, here in Russia, to look inside of ourselves to check our own hearts and once again repent before the Lord, so that we can cleanse our hearts before we will appear before the Lord," said Nikitin.

"Thirdly, we realize that we have to be honest before ourselves and before the Lord. Are we doing everything that we possibly can to bring the salvation message of Jesus Christ to the people during these last days? Are we building up the body of Christ and really standing in support of one another? So this is also the day of interceding and repentance for the Russian Church," Nikitin said.

From Kiev, Ukrainian entrepreneur and publisher Alex Yefetov wrote: "We are all shocked by what happened in N.Y.C., Washington and Pennsylvania yesterday. Please accept our deep condolences regarding the great tragedy which happened to the whole American nation.

"At this difficult time we want you to know that we here in Ukraine are in deep grief and con-

stant prayer for all who suffered from that outburst of terrorism. We ask our Lord to turn this evil to the good and we really believe He will do that in ways we do not know yet," Yefetov said.

"We love you and feel pain in our hearts for all of you. Please let us know if anybody of your relatives/colleagues/friends needs specific prayer in these days," he said, adding: "May our God send His special blessing upon all of you."

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Theology/Agriculture

What does it mean to be Reformed? (1)

In 1997, the Christian Reformed Church of North America adopted a Denominational Ministry Plan, which responded to the visions and ideas of church leaders and local congregations from across the denomination. That plan, which was a product of two extensive listening tours, focused

on detailed goals and objectives. This plan was later revised so that the focus would be more on the CRC's theological identity and core values. The revision arose out of the growing conviction that the church as a whole, and its agencies and institutions in particular, need greater clarity about the

CRC's identity and purpose. Various factors contribute to this conviction:

- Many CRC members, including elders, deacons, pastors, and other church leaders, have difficulty articulating what it means to be a Reformed Christian and Reformed church in a North Ameri-

can religious environment of declining biblical and theological literacy.

- As the CRC becomes more diverse in culture, education, ethnicity, and the religious background of her members, the CRC needs a positive biblical and theological vision that communicates across these and other differences.

- Clarity regarding the church's identity and purpose is necessary in order for the church to set precise goals and develop effective ministries.

- The CRC is often uncertain how to view itself in relationship to the broader church. At times the CRC is too self-congratulatory, failing to appreciate the richness and diversity of the broader Christian church. At other times the CRC is too apologetic, even embarrassed that it has a particular theological identity.

- The CRC often has difficulty in dealing with change. At times the CRC is too resistant to change, unnecessarily rigid and inflexible. At other times the CRC is too quick to change, lacking discernment about what has enduring value and significance.

Given these concerns, we reprint here the first article in a series of four on a Reformed identity.

The purpose of this identity statement is to answer the question "What does it mean to be a Reformed Christian?" Many Christians in North America, including members of the CRC, may question the value, even the appropriateness, of asking such a question. The emphasis in North American Christianity today is upon finding those things that unite Christians with, not distinguish them from, fellow Christians.

Why bother?

In many ways the impulse to focus upon what Christians have in common with one another is exactly the right one. The CRC often has spent too much time and energy on matters that divide the CRC from, instead of unite it with, other Christians. Jesus himself prayed that the church would be one (John 17:27). Paul makes a great deal of the fact that the body of Christ is one (1 Cor. 12:12, Eph. 4:4-6). And what better mission and vision statement could any church want or need than Paul's great call to "come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ" (Eph. 4:13)? It's hard to put too much emphasis upon what unites Christians with one another.

Moreover, the enemy of the



COURTESY FRENCH EMBASSY PRESS AND INFORMATION

Reformed Christians are confessing Protestants with a theological tradition that goes back to John Calvin, the Reformers and to St. Augustine.

Christian church today is not other Christians, whether Lutherans or Methodists, Roman Catholics or Pentecostals. The primary enemy of the North American church is a deadly secularism that threatens all Christians, against which they should stand together in common faith and action. Indeed, in many ways the CRC already joins hands with other Christians. Local congregations often work together with other churches in setting up food banks and tutoring programs. Denominational agencies often do their worldwide ministry in collaboration with other churches and religious organizations.

So why does the CRC continue to spend time and energy articulating what it means to be Reformed?

Everyone has an accent

All Christians talk with what one person has called "an accent," a particular theological accent. There is no such thing as pure, Christian talk. Imagine trying to get people from New Orleans, Boston, Brooklyn, and Omaha to all talk with the same accent. It doesn't work—not because these people dislike each other, but because language by its very nature develops locally. Particular people living together develop particular ways of expressing themselves. "Culture" is the accumulation of these particularities, including shared experiences, shared meanings, and shared ways of life. The particularity of human community is actually part of the marvelous diversity of God's creation.

In the same way, Christians, as they work and worship together, develop particular ways of talking. There is no such thing as pure, theologically neutral, Christian

Continued on page 11...

Government meddling in agriculture?!

Common wisdom among farmers: "When the government gives advice on how to farm, do the opposite." Farmers are soon to receive a massive dose of government recommendations and programs intended to radically alter the course of agriculture. If the preview is any indication, stewards of the land ought to greet the presentation with a large dose of skepticism.

The *Edmonton Journal* recently ran a four-day, many-paged series on what is labeled the coming "revolution" in Canadian agriculture. The writers pinpointed Ottawa's primary concern, which is the billions they have shelled out since 1986 to help farmers remain competitive with their counterparts in Europe and the U.S.A., where food production is highly subsidized.

The federal and provincial ministers of agriculture meeting in Whitehorse, Yukon, earlier this year (Whitehorse is about as far removed from agricultural expertise as anywhere) appointed themselves agents of change. They apparently intend to do this by offering incentives for closing down small to medium-sized farm operations. The hope is that large operators will move in and with the latest in hi-tech equipment and the so-called economies of scale continue to provide the cheap food to which we are all accustomed.

Bereft of agricultural policy

Canadian governments are notoriously bereft of agricultural policy, especially as it relates to primary considerations such as soil and land use. It seems that short-term projects are selected in the hope of making immediate favorable impressions. Nowhere in the talk of bringing on a revolution in agricultural practices is there a mention of sustainability. Instead we see a seriously imbalanced proposal with little regard for the long-term. Soil quality, land use and other basics to agriculture seem only incidental to marketing considerations.

And again they have trotted out the tired old "economy of scale" principle with no context or qualification and all the while their own statisticians report that the largest farms take the lion's share of subsidies handed out. Also, while politicians and bureaucrats are promoting size, the farm press features farmers down-sizing in order to cut costs. Large enterprises also go bankrupt.

Elected officials are also calling for farmers to grow crops for "niche" markets such as health foods. Farmers have for some time been trying exotic crops. Sometimes pursuing a niche market works, but not always. Specialized equipment, extensive market research and advertising require a prohibitive investment. Then the small volume of

COUNTRY COUNTERCULTURE

VERN M. GLEDDIE

product required and limited competition from buyers soon floods a market and kills it.

Curiously, livestock are mentioned as perhaps the most "lucrative" enterprise for diversity on the farm and even a "niche" product opportunity. However, everyone (excluding governments, obviously) knows that livestock production has always been an integral part of agriculture. Besides, livestock cycles through times of surplus and deficiency, low and high prices. Traditionally livestock cycles follow grain cycles of glut and short supply. The history of government interference whether through recommendation or providing incentives has only exacerbated livestock market fluctuations. Interestingly, farmers who profited most from government incentives in the past were those who needed it least. Finally, the most stable "live" stock enterprises are those where production and price are controlled, for instance in dairy and chicken production. Our governments, under some public pressure, do not much care for such orderly marketing.

"Value-added" is another pet of Ottawa and its provincial counterparts. Again, livestock, specifically cattle, are touted as a prime example of success. The Alberta experience is cited where until a few years ago calves were shipped out of the province each fall to Ontario followed by trainloads of Alberta-grown barley. Now the cattle stay in Alberta where a huge cattle-feeding industry has developed along with processing facilities. That is value-added industry. Ironically, though Alberta now keeps its cattle home, thousands of cattle from northern Alberta are transported up to 900 miles into southern Alberta and many B-trains of feed barley follow them down.

Government does not have the expertise or the dedication to farm. Agriculture is not the responsibility of the governments, but the means to do it is. Farming responsibility is for those who practice agriculture. Legislators could look to returning to some of the responsibilities they have abandoned, such as inspection and regulation of products as they reach the consumer. Farmers and others should be regulated in how they treat the soil and the countryside. But as a former prime minister said about another subject, "The governments should stay out of the bedrooms of Canada", so should they stay out of farming.



Vern Gleddie has a sheep ranch near Edmonton, Alta.

Theology

What does it mean to be Reformed? (1)

... continued from page 10

talk. Particular people who have had common experiences of faith and life develop particular ways of understanding Scripture, expressing their faith, and worshiping God. To be sure, when these differences lead to conflict and alienation, then healthy differences have become sinful divisions. But Christians will always talk with particular theological accents.

Indeed, this particularity is also deeply biblical. The 1 Corinthians 12 image of the church as a body highlights both the unity of the church (one body) and the diversity of the church (hands and feet and eyes). The teaching of this great chapter is clear: The biblically healthy church has deep unity and rich diversity. Indeed, one of the deep biblical truths is the truth of the one and the many. The triune God himself is one and three.

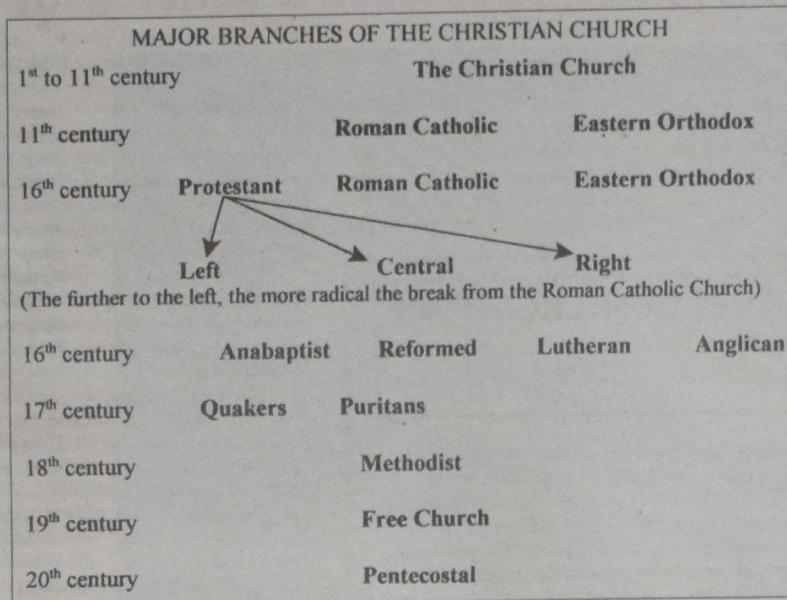
There's nothing inherently sinful or divisive when Reformed Christians or other groups of Christians try to understand and develop their own theological accent. In fact, such self-understanding, as it strengthens the particular hands or feet or eyes of the body, strengthens the whole body in its united witness to the world.

The Reformed accent

Sometimes people use the term "Reformed" or "distinctively Reformed" as though it's a theological accent spoken by only a few people, and as though it's an accent that has little in common with the broader Christian church. Neither of these is true.

The Reformed accent is much larger than the CRC and the CRC's particular history. It thrives in countries around the world, including Hungary, Korea, Indonesia, Scotland, and Madagascar. The Heidelberg Catechism, only one of many Reformed confessions, has been translated into thirty languages. Moreover, the CRC itself is increasingly diverse. On a given Sunday, members of the CRC worship in at least fourteen different languages!

Moreover, Reformed Christianity shares much in common with the universal Christian church. Reformed Christianity is squarely anchored in that broad Christian orthodoxy that goes back to the New Testament church. Reformed Christians share with all other Christians a common faith in the triune God who created the heavens and the earth, whose second person became incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth, and whose third person has indwelt the church by the Holy Spirit. Reformed Christians join with Christians in all times



and places in affirming the saving purpose of God to unite all things in Jesus Christ, the mission of the church to proclaim this good news, and the hope of Christ's return in glory to usher in the new heaven and the new earth. Reformed Christians confess their faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed along with the church universal.

This identity statement seeks to articulate some of the particular accents of the Reformed tradition, but in ways that are accessible across many ethnic, denominational, and generational lines. In fact, such an inclusive expression of the Reformed perspective is not just desirable, but essential, if the Reformed perspective is to provide ongoing sources of unity and purpose for the CRC.

The family tree

One way to explain the Reformed tradition is to locate the Reformed family in the broader family tree of the Christian Church. Above is a very simple chart that shows how the Christian church has developed over the centuries.

The Christian church was united until the eleventh century when the western church (the Roman Catholic Church) split from the eastern church (the Orthodox Church). In the sixteenth century, new winds of the Spirit blew through the Roman Catholic Church, and the Protestant Reformation was underway. Christians discovered anew the central message of the Bible—that we are saved by grace alone through faith. Out of the Protestant Reformation came four major branches—the Anabaptist, Reformed, Lutheran, and Anglican.

The order in which these four branches are listed from left to right is significant. The further to the left one goes, the more radical was that church's break from the Roman Catholic Church. In terms of formality of worship, this chart moves from less formal (left side) to more formal (right side); in terms of sacraments, from less central in worship to more central in worship; in terms of church government, from less hierarchical to more hierarchical. In this family of European based churches, the Reformed perspective often represents a broad middle ground.

A third way

As Reformed Christians seek to locate themselves in the North American Protestant family tree, it's tempting to think that the Reformed perspective as found in the CRC represents a middle ground between present-day liberalism and fundamentalism. After all, Reformed Christians do share with fundamentalism an unapologetic belief in supernaturalism, and with liberalism a desire for the Christian faith to be culturally engaging.

But the Reformed tradition as that has evolved in the CRC doesn't really fit on a continuum between these two North American extremes. Most Reformed folks strongly distinguish themselves from liberalism, with its inadequate view of Scripture's inspiration and authority, its anti-supernaturalism, and its wariness of talking about personal sin and the need for repentance and faith in Christ for salvation. Furthermore, Reformed folks also strongly distinguish themselves from fundamentalism, with its anti-intellectualism and suspicion of

science and learning that arises from a lack of emphasis upon the doctrine of creation; its lack of cultural engagement; and its tendency to emphasize the rule of Christ in the world to come rather than in this world, a tendency that arises from a dispensational understanding of history in which the kingdom of God is still a future reality.

Traditionally, the Reformed perspective has represented a third way that is quite distinct from both liberalism and fundamentalism, and that does not define itself in terms of this North American struggle. Reformed Christians are "confessing Protestants" whose posture is not first of all defined polemically (against liberals or against fundamentalists), but is defined historically by a theological tradition that goes back to John Calvin and the Reformers and to St. Augustine.

Are we evangelicals?

One helpful way to locate the Reformed branch in the North American family tree is in relationship to "evangelicals." The term "evangelical" is used differently by different people. When evangelical Lutherans, of whom there are eight million in North America, use the term "evangelical," they mean orthodox and Christ-centered theology. For them it is quite possible to be part of a mainline, historic Protestant denomination and be evangelical, and feel no tension between those two. But others use the terms "evangelical" and "fundamentalist" synonymously, which is quite a different meaning.

The term "evangelical" is most often used by those who wish to distinguish themselves from fundamentalism, and often for many of the same reasons that Reformed folks wish to distinguish themselves from fundamentalism. Furthermore, evangelicals themselves often see significant overlap in the terms "evangelical" and "Reformed." Institutions such as Fuller Seminary, Gordon Conwell Seminary, Wheaton College, Christianity Today, and Inter-Var-

sity Christian Fellowship, and persons such as John Stott, J.I. Packer, and Chuck Colson would describe themselves as evangelical. And while they are not *confessionally* or *denominationally* Reformed, they would consider themselves *theologically* Reformed in much of their teachings. In the same way, many Reformed folks positively (and rightly) identify themselves as "evangelical."

Three approaches to being Reformed

Observers of the Reformed tradition have identified three major Reformed emphases or "minds" that have flourished in the North American cultural context.

The first emphasis or mind is the *doctrinalist*. Here Reformed refers primarily to a strong adherence to certain Christian doctrines as taught in the Scriptures and reflected in the confessions of the church. The question for doctrinalists is "What do we believe?" Doctrinalists especially appreciate Louis Berkhof, a Reformed theologian whose *Systematic Theology* is a thorough summary of Reformed doctrine.

The second emphasis or mind is the *pietist*. Here Reformed refers to the Christian life and to one's personal relationship to God. The question for pietists is "How do we experience God in our daily walk of faith?" Pietists especially appreciate Hendrik de Cock, a pastor in the Netherlands who led the Afscheiding, a breakoff in 1834 from the Dutch state church which had lost its theological and spiritual vitality.

The third emphasis or mind is the *transformationalist*. Here Reformed refers to the relationship of Christianity to culture, to a world-and-life view, and to Christ as transforming culture. The question for transformationalists is "How do we relate the gospel to the world?" Transformationalists especially appreciate Abraham Kuyper, a pastor, scholar, and prime minister of the Netherlands who led the Doleantie movement in the Netherlands in the 1880s, a movement that stressed the development of a Christian culture and had a very direct impact upon the CRC in North America.

Obviously these three emphases or minds are overlapping. No hard and fast line can be drawn between them. But they also represent three distinct approaches, both historically and conceptually, and provide the framework for presenting sixteen key words or phrases that summarize the Reformed accent.

(To be continued in the next issue)

Celtic Christianity provides a better way

Bert Hielema

A Celtic Cross looks more like an ancient shield than a religious symbol. I guess it was meant to be both, based on the passage in Ephesians 6, where the armor of God is described in military terms: belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the spirit. The same cross, more of a Roman version, hangs on the back wall, behind the pulpit and choir loft, in my Presbyterian Church in Tweed.

The cross with the orb at its centre is said to represent the sun and the light of the world, and expresses the desire to hold together the revelation of God in creation and the revelation of God in the Scriptures. Together they reflect the practice of listening for the living Word in nature as well as in the Bible. There is a Celtic prayer which has as opening line: "Almighty God, Sun behind all suns ... in every friend we have the sunshine of your presence...."

I have often wondered whether 1 Timothy 6, which says: "God ... who lives in inapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see...", has something to do with the sun. After all, even to look at the sun with the naked eye will blind us.

Two shoes

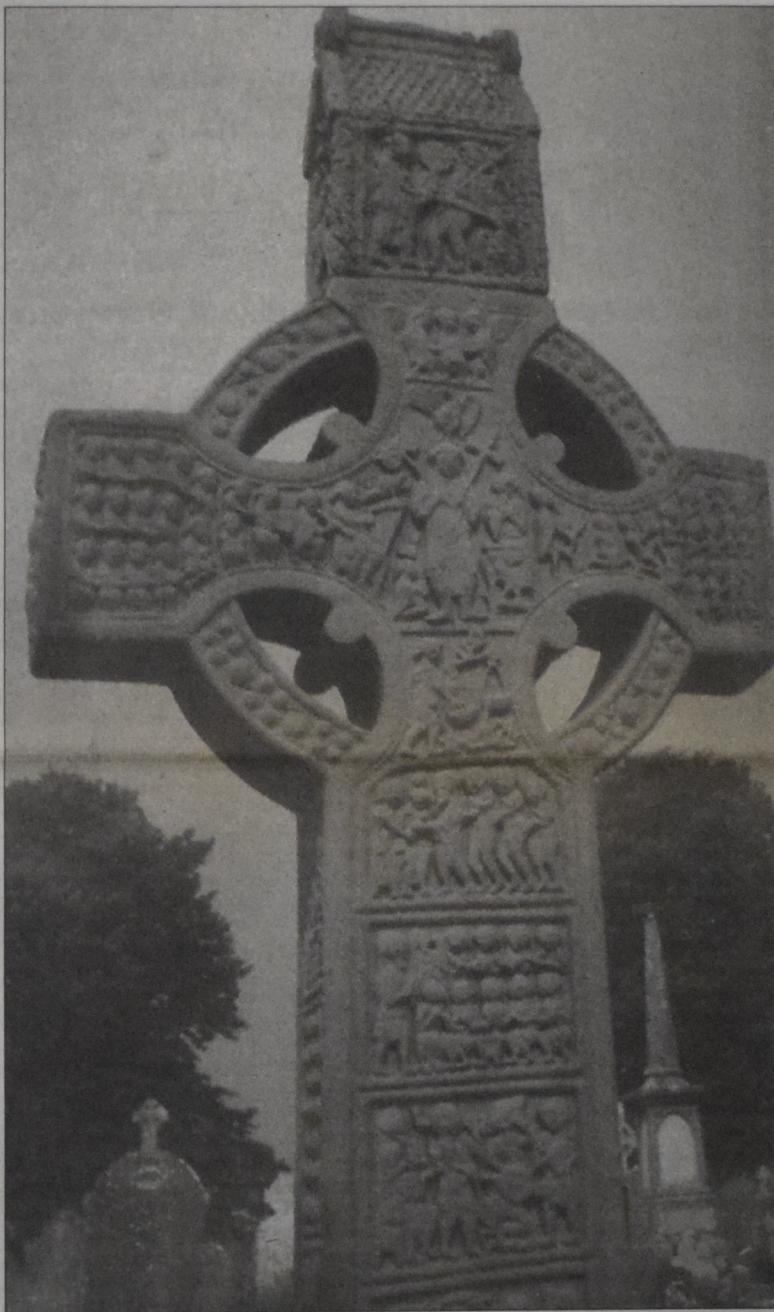
That God is present in all creation was certainly the conviction of the ninth-century philosopher, John Scotus Eriugena, perhaps the greatest teacher the Celtic branch of the church ever produced. His name simply means John, the Scotchman, from Ireland.

He taught that Christ moves among us in two shoes, as it were, one shoe being that of creation, the other that of the Scriptures, and stressed the need to be as alert and attentive to Christ moving among us in creation as we are to the voice of Christ in the Scriptures. One Gaelic-Celtic prayer says: "Show to us in everything we touch, in every one we meet, your presence."

Like the Celtic Christian teachers before him, the thoughts of John the Irishman, were particularly shaped by the mysticism of the Apostle John, who tells us that "God is Love." The realization that God is a love affair sums up the doctrine of the Trinity: God is one and indivisible but within that unity there also is a Trinity, the Christian experience of God. Celtic Christians, a 1000 years ago, expressed this in this poem:

*The Three who are over my head.
The Three who are under my tread.
The Three who are over me here
The Three who are over me there.
The Three who are in the earth near.
The Three who are up in the air.
The Three who in heaven do dwell.
The Three in the great ocean swell,
Pervading Three, O be with me!*

When God created, he called it good after each phase, and very good when it was all completed. That basic goodness in creation is a special feature of Celtic Christianity. Says the Irish John: "God's divine goodness is the essence of the whole universe and its substance. Evil is opposed to the existence of creation and where goodness is creative, evil is destructive."



An ancient Celtic cross in Ireland.

SHOSTAL

All this was written long before we experienced the evil of pollution, of global warming, of ozone depletion, which, we can now clearly see, is the devil at work.

Writings condemned

As so often happens in the church, true reformers and true radicals are not tolerated by the ecclesiastical authorities. In 1225 the main writings of John the Irishman were condemned by the Pope and in 1685 they were placed on the Index, the papal list of forbidden writings.

But the Celtic influence persisted. The people of the many islands off the Scottish coast, the Hebrides, living in isolation for

centuries, retained much of the Celtic religion in their traditions. There is a story of a woman from the island of Harris who suffered from a type of skin disease and was exiled from the community to live alone on the seashore. There she collected plants and shellfish, and having boiled them for eating, washed her sores with the remaining liquid. In time she was cured. She saw the grace of healing as having come to her through creation and so she prayed:

*There is no plant in the ground
But it is full of his virtue,
There is no form in the strand
But it is full of his blessing.
Jesu, Jesu, Jesu!*

*Jesu who ought to be praised.
There is no life in the sea,
there is no creature in the river,
there is naught in the firmament,
but proclaims his goodness.
Jesu, Jesu, Jesu!*

*Jesu who ought to be praised.
There is no bird on the wing,
there is no star in the sky
there is nothing beneath the sun,
but proclaims his goodness.
Jesu, Jesu, Jesu!
Jesu who ought to be praised.*

God speaks everywhere

The apostle John had a fine ear for God's creation. Listen to the opening words of the gospel of John: In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. That Word became flesh, the Word that is at the heart of life and from which all that is, comes forth. If God were to stop speaking the whole created universe would cease to exist. In the rising of the morning sun God speaks to us of grace and new beginnings and the fertility of the earth is a sign of how life wells up from within, from the dark unknown place of God.

The other John, John the Irishman, a millennium ago, tells us that God is in all things, the essence of life. God has not created everything out of nothing, but out of his own essence, out of his very life. That is the light that is in all things, "the light which is the light of angels, the light of the created universe, the light indeed of all visible and invisible existence."

Says this Irishman: "the way to learn about God is through the letters of the Scriptures and through the species of creation." He urges us to listen to these expressions of God and to conceive of their meaning in our souls. So it is no wonder that the national color of the Irish is green. They have been the Green Party as long as we have recorded history.

The attitude of The Irish John and Celtic spirituality in general is diametrically opposed to the materialism we have in our world, shaped by the Roman Catholic dualism, now so evident in Protestant Christianity as well.

Christ the first

To me Col. 1: 15 -20, is one of the most intriguing passage in the Bible. This text, it seems to me, more than any other in the Bible exemplifies the Celtic Spirit. This is what it says: Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. This is what it means to me. When God planned the creation, he started with duplicating himself in the form of Jesus Christ, in the form of the ultimate in creation, the human beings we are. Christ is the first human being, the firstborn of all creation, and we look like Christ.

We, as women and men, as boys and girls, are the greatest part of God's creation. We also are made of that creation. Adam means clay. God fashioned us, the human race, from the clay of the earth, a mixture of dry dust and water. He, as the Master Sculptor, created us, fashioned us, shaped us,

molded us, in the image of that perfect, divine creature, God's counterpart, Jesus Christ. That is what verse 15 says.

Verse 16 continues in that vein: "For by Christ all things were created." Remember Christ, the first human being, did this. And, by virtue that we are made in his image, it seems to me that we can read this also: For by us, as human beings, as his body, all things were created and will be recreated.

However, because we have strayed from the path of Christ, have not seen creation as the Real Word of God, we have gone in exactly the opposite direction, a direction to which the Celtic Christians objected. For this reason, by placing so much emphasis on God's world, they were persecuted by the church, with the result that reason, doctrine, church dogma, human wisdom, became the measure of faith. We now see the result.

A matter of serving

We see a world plagued with pollution, plagued with poverty, plagued with a plurality of pains. We see a world where the idol of economic growth takes priority over any creation friendly act, so that now many people see a world depleted with whatever is precious. All this rests upon the wrong interpretation of Genesis 2:15. There it says that God gave humanity the charge to look after God's creation. Curiously the word here for taking care is the same as in Joshua 24: 15, where Joshua, the man who succeeded Moses as leader of Israel, vouches: "As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." The same Hebrew word, that of taking care of God's creation and serving the Lord, is used in both instances.

This serving is reflected in the prayer of St. Patrick, the great Irish evangelist who fought against this very matter. His prayer is typical:

*I bind myself today
the virtues of the starlit heaven
The glorious sun's life-giving ray.
The whiteness of the moon at even,
The flashing of the lightning free,
The whirling wind's tempestuous shocks,
the stable earth, the deep salt sea
Around the old eternal rocks.*

There again is evident the closeness to creation, but also the sense that Christ is in everything, including ourselves, based on this very Bible passage in Col. 1:19, where it says that God was pleased to have all God's fulness dwell in Jesus.

*Christ be with me, Christ within me
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.*

Celtic Christianity does not see a great gap between heaven and earth. No, the two are seen as inseparably intertwined.

Below are listed some books I have read on Celtic Christianity. In *The Celtic Way of Evangelism: How Christians can reach the West*, the author outlines five proven Celtic

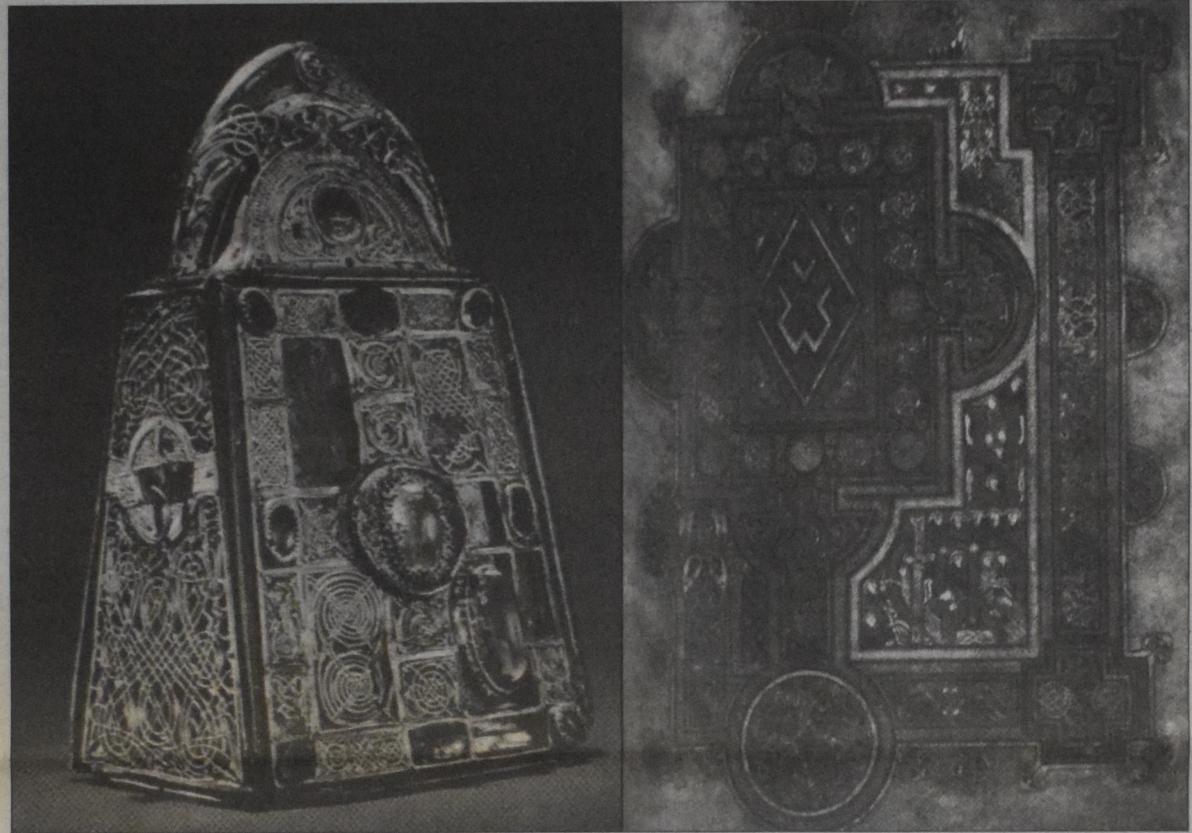


PHOTO: LEE BOLTON

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN, IRELAND, THE GREEN STUDIO LTD.

Left: A bronze box for a bell, decorated with silver, gold and jewels, reputed to have belonged to Saint Patrick, and now displayed in the National Museum of Ireland. Right: The Book of Kells, an illuminated manuscript of the Gospels from Ireland, mid-700s or early 800s.

Church practices he believes are needed today:

(1) We need to move from the "lone ranger" approach in the church, where the minister is the all and in all, to partnership forms of ministry.

My comment: Many churches have made a beginning with this in their Sunday services, also through weekly prayer meetings, Bible study groups and social activities, which are more important as loneliness becomes more frequent.

(2) We must create 'neo-monastic church communities' as places of formation for modern Christians.

My comment: That is a difficult one in our subdivided world, where each is on his/her own in our own dwelling, and often lonely to boot. Monastic means communal living, as in a convent or monastery, but then for families. It is something that needs to be explored and, who knows, the future may impose this sort of living on us.

(3) We must develop imaginative/ contemplative prayer patterns.

My comment: Having been a member of our prayer group for years, I can only recommend this to all. But it takes a degree of courage and humility to participate.

(4) Practise full hospitality as our prime response to those who are seeking.

My comment: We are all very private people and not prone to open our houses and hearts to others. In our busyness, we think we have no time for this.

(5) Rediscover that belonging comes before believing for those new to the faith.

My comment: These are new times. We see every day what the Roman Way of Christianity is bringing to the world: destruction and pollution.

Dangerous dualism

In 1966, Dr Lynn White addressed the American Academy for the Advancement of Science on "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis." He pointed out: "The church has taught that God planned this earth explicitly for man's benefit and ruled no item in the physical creation had any purpose save to serve man's purposes. Christianity, in absolute contrast to ancient paganism and Asian religions, not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends."

We now know that this approach has been destructive for our planet. I sincerely believe that Celtic Christianity provides a better answer to today's way of serving God than any church way yet confessed.

The Celtic cross expresses this plainly. The orb, the circle at the centre of the cross represents the sun and the light of the world, and expresses the desire to hold together the revelation of God in creation and the revelation of God in scriptures.

It is my plea for all of us to live that close connection between God's word as we find it in the Bible and in God's work of art, his

Creation.

We must remember that the Bible will disappear. God's word in Creation will stand forever and will be the home of God's people for ever and ever. Romans 1:20 expresses this in such a way that we have no excuse: "For since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made. So we are without excuse."

We may not know the Scriptures, but all of us live in God's created word and are God's created word. So, we are without excuse. We can't plead ignorance, because we all live and breathe and depend on the riches of God's creation. The more we study it, the more we marvel at its intricate beauty and glorious interdependence.

This is our Father's world, which we will inherit as his children. Treat it as such, because it is ours to live in forever.

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(CC reminds the reader that we do not necessarily agree with everything that appears in these pages, and certainly not a view of creation-as-emanation, which is the teaching that creation is an extension of God's being - Editor.)

Depression

Happy anniversary?

Herman de Jong

When Hank opens the Christian weekly to the obituaries column, his own face and Greta's jump out from the page. The Anniversary and Obituary columns are joined as if they belong together. For a moment he was worried.

Must have been Jake, their son, who placed the anniversary announcement with picture. He's a preacher and has always been good at that kind of thing. Picked some nice Bible verses, and added something about God being the Third Partner. Must have cost a mint! Besides the Bible verses, there's the list of 10 children and their spouses and all their grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The question that upsets his inner peace from day to day is: Is there really a God who cares? Where were you, God, when I needed you most!

It will be quite a reception by the looks of it.

He glances at the obituary column. He likes to compare their ages to his own. Began doing that when he turned 70. He's 80 now and has noticed that most men die before then. But look at all the women — 85, 87, and one that reached 99. Greta may get that old, you never know.

He puts the paper down.

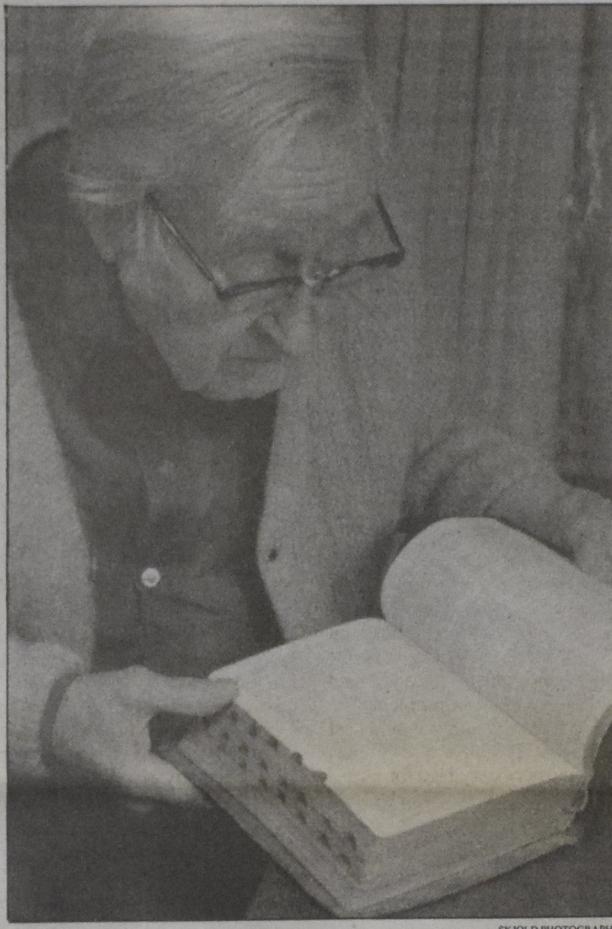
Greta is banging dishes in the kitchen. Rather loudly. She mustn't have her hearing aid in. No use calling out to her that the anniversary ad is in the paper. He knows how excited she'll be. When Greta gets excited, her face turns red as a beet. When they got married, her face almost lit up the church. She hated it then, and she hates it now, but can't do a thing about it.

There's another reason he remains silent. He should feel happy looking forward to their anniversary, but he isn't.

When the day comes, he'll put his best leg forward and act as happy as a child getting a puppy on his birthday. No problem. He's quite good at masking his sadness with a wide smile.

Nobody, except perhaps Greta, will guess at the misery deep within him. She will look at him and say: "What's the matter, Hank, can't you tell me?"

But how can he tell her? How



"You're thinking and reading too much," said Greta.

"Faith and believing can't be analyzed," said the pastor.

He had answered: "If God gives us a brain, shouldn't we use it? I have the right to analyze and make up my own mind."

can he tell that little woman with the big faith about his struggle to believe in the existence of God? He knows there are people who doubt their salvation, people who groan and sigh because they feel themselves too sinful to be saved. But at least they know there is a God. He has sunk even deeper.

The question that upsets his inner peace from day to day is: Is there really a God who cares?

Where were you, God, when I needed you most!

He remembers the Great Depression. Father, a factory laborer, suddenly without work. They ate potatoes with *stipet* (lard) for several years. He was 13 then and still had a child-like faith. God, who had provided his chosen people with manna, could have provided for them.

Did he? No, a war broke out, and at the end of it, his little sister had died of malnutrition.

He'd been drafted by the Dutch government to fight in Indonesia.

On Good Friday, his friend Joop had stepped on a landmine. His strong body was torn to shreds, but still struggling to stay alive. He'd sat beside Joop's bed, praying and praying and praying. On the third day, when Christ arose, Joop had died.

He returned from Indonesia to find the church of his father and mother torn apart. The schism even caused a split between them. His strong-willed mother said farewell to father's disobedient church and went to the purer church. Only when her purer church split into two factions a few years later, did she reluctantly come back. A good marriage crumbled before his very eyes.

His parents stayed together for the sake of their children. Silent prayers before meals seemed to make for silent days as only the most necessary words were spoken. Which God did his father and mother serve?

For the first time in his life, the devil of doubt began to destroy his faith. That silent God — had

mankind fashioned him? Was he only a fruit of our innate desire to live forever?

He'd married Greta and come to Canada, like many other soldiers who had fought in Indonesia and couldn't get used to the banality and narrow thinking of their homeland. In Canada he had not planned to join any church, but Greta had different ideas. Of course they had to go to church. To her, life without a church was unthinkable.

He gave in, and for the remainder of their marriage he'd been doing just that, giving in, for he soon discovered that Greta was a strong-willed woman. Only at work was he a man of stature; that's where his will was law. At home he willingly gave in to Greta's wishes. Life was much easier that way. He remembered the cat and mouse games of his parents too well. But it ruined the companionship they had during their first years of marriage.

Greta often said: "Can't we talk it over, Hank?"

They did sometimes, Greta talking while he listened good-humoredly, but he always had the feeling that he was pulling at the shortest end.

He wanted him to get involved in church — the last thing he wanted to do. Yet, he'd become a cadet leader, a deacon, and then an elder. Of all things: an elder!

Just when the normalcy and regularity of church-life had made him feel like a child of God again however, disaster had struck. In the tenth year of their marriage, he experienced his first severe depression.

No problem, God would turn the tide around. A Christian is a happy person. Oh sure, sometimes you might go through a valley, but after much prayer, God extends his hand and pulls you up again.

The minister said: "Pray, Hank, we have a mighty God."

But he could not pray. How can you pray to someone who does not exist in your mind?

His depressed thoughts circled around earthly problems. Day and night the same thoughts made life unbearable. Those forever churning thoughts seemed to leave no room for any thoughts about God and Jesus.

Slowly he recuperated, but he knew he had lost his faith. He had become bitter about being forsaken by smiling Christians and a loving God. Prozac had prevented his growing wish to jump off the bridge and end it all. It was Prozac which had led him back to a

normal life, not God.

Three times he'd gone through these periods of utter despair, three times he'd felt forsaken by God, three times Prozac had propped him up again.

After those dark periods he had not become an elder again. Greta told others that Hank had to take it easy now. He himself knew that there was another reason.

The banging in the kitchen stops. Greta comes into the living room, calling him back to reality. "Come on, Hank, we're going to visit Cindy and your newest great-grandson, the first Hank of the whole bunch of great-grandchildren. I'm gonna get dressed now, don't forget to comb your hair, hear!"

He nods that he has heard, sips the last bit of cold coffee, and starts thinking again.

Finally, just before his retirement, he had found the surety of faith again. Just like that, watching a Billy Graham program, hearing that old bass, George Beverly Shea, sing "Amazing Grace."

Amazing grace, indeed! For years during his depressions, he had thought of himself as an unbeliever, even though, according to his Christian counselor, he couldn't help it because it was part of his sickness.

God had given peace to his soul, and he could pray again before meals. Greta had embraced him and they had cried for a few minutes.

Many good years had followed. All his life he had been a carpenter; now fine carpentry became his hobby. He had served the Lord in Nigeria several times, helping to build schools and churches. Never an exuberant Christian, he had become one there, amongst the lively Christians whose churches he was building.

Then he'd turned 75. High blood pressure, diabetes, trouble walking. You name it and he had it. Finally a quadruple bypass.

He'd known that the time would come that his body would break down, but after being on the road of sanctification for such a long time, he had not expected that his faith, too, would break down.

Not able to walk much, he sat in his armchair most of the time and began reading more than ever. No novels, but theology books. Instead of deepening his faith, however, they had an adverse reaction.

Continued on page 16...

Sports

Canadian football star to build 'children's village' in Africa

Child slavery has become a multi-billion industry in Africa, he says

Dan Wooding

KAMPALA, UGANDA (ANS)

— Peter Turko, a former Canadian Grid Iron star, and now a pastor who ministers to Uganda's orphan children and AIDS victims, has announced plans to build a "Children's Village" in Uganda to help some of Africa's forgotten children. He says that he hopes this will be the first of many that will house orphans throughout the African continent.

Turko, who works with his American-born wife Angie, said that a large number of Africa's children are experiencing "degradeable and horrible suffering" as they are being kidnapped for child slavery and also to become child soldiers in what has become a multi-billion dollar child slavery business.

"Orphaned children in Africa are unprotected and have become the victims of kidnappers who sell them to the slave traders who are making billions of dollars selling them in different parts of the world, even in Europe where they claim to be civilized."

"Our hope is to build a 'Children's Village' so we can keep them out of the hands of such callous profiteers and demonstrate the love of God to them through our actions and by bringing them up in the ways of the Lord."

Children bought for \$14

Turko says that Africa's children, as they flee poverty, are being increasingly exploited by traffickers, who make billions of dollars a year by buying children for as little as 14 dollars a head and sending them to slavery in Europe or the Gulf.

"The trafficking of children has become a very lucrative activity, which brings in nearly seven billion dollars a year to organized crime outfits," Tim De Meyer, a legal official with the International Labor Organization (ILO), told the Pan-African Forum on the future of Children, co-sponsored by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

"Across Africa, girls less than five years old work as domestics. In Western and Central Africa, girls who are barely eight years old are taken to work as domestics and are destined for prostitution and in Tanzania, girls under 15 work in night-clubs, where they are victims of sexual abuse,"

De Meyer asserted.

Turko said that in Africa 80 million children five to 14 years old are forced to work, some as prostitutes or miners, creating one of the world's most serious child labor problems. "The number could rise to 100 million by 2015."

In the words of Meera Sethi, representative of the International Immigration Organization, Africa has become the "supplier of fresh flesh", for countries in the European Union, via the pedophile and prostitute rings.

Sethi said: "Belgium, Britain and Italy, receive the youngest African girls, while Germany and Spain are major transit countries."

UNICEF estimates that 200,000 children from Western and Central Africa are sold into slavery each year, notably for seasonal work such as harvesting cocoa and other cash crops.

Child soldiers in Africa

Turko said that a recent report estimated that 300,000 children, some as young as seven and eight, are fighting in conflicts in 41 countries around the world, and about 100,000 of them are bearing arms in Africa.

The revelation came in a global report released in Johannesburg, South Africa, by the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers.

The study documents military recruitment by government armed forces, paramilitaries and rebel and militia groups.

The authors chose South Africa as a role model to launch their finding, because youngsters cannot be recruited into the South African National Defense Force until they are 18.

But the record in other parts of the continent is lamentable. Minors continue to be recruited because as children they can be cheap, expendable and easier to condition into fearless killing and unthinking obedience. The report said, "Child soldiers are often fed drugs to suppress their fear."

The report says that children are used as frontline fighters, spies, porters, guards and minesweepers and they also become sex slaves in combat zones.

Rory Mungoven, the Coalition's International Coordinator, noted that the widespread availability of modern, lightweight weapons had greatly contributed to the child soldier problem.

The report cites: Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Uganda are among the countries

with the worst records in the world for using children as fighters in recent years.

Charity International

Turko says that he is working with Charity International, a church-based non-profit community development corporation, and they require about 160 hectares of fertile soil for their first village. "We need a place where we can grow two crops a year. The best land borders on Lake Victoria. We can always draw water from the lake if there is a lack of rain."

He stated that they have been offered parcels of land bordering on Lake Victoria of up to 360 hectares. "These would be ideal to house our 'Children's Village,'" he said. "Other parcels of land offered are 60 miles or more from Kampala.... These unfortunately are not as fertile as the parcels on Lake Victoria and may only be able to produce one crop a year and could suffer drought problems."

He estimates that it would cost them about \$693,000 (US) to purchase the necessary land for the pilot "Children's Village" in Uganda and once they have that up and running, they will try to build others that "will house all the needy orphan children throughout Africa, Lord willing."

Besides those children who have been sold into slavery, he says he will be working with AIDS victims in Africa.

Unprecedented crisis

A spokesman for Charity International said, "It is estimated that 5,500 people per day perish as a result of this crisis, with 14 million already dead. Currently there are 10 million orphaned children with a prospective of 40 million in the next 10 years. It is the view of Charity International that this is an unprecedented crisis in human history, one that will have devastating consequences worldwide. While the United Nations and many of Africa's national governments attempt to address this issue the magnitude of the crisis is devastating the economic infrastructures of many of these nations."

"Charity International's vision is to primarily address the current orphan crisis in Africa. Many of these orphaned children have flooded into the major cities of Africa. They are living on the streets, scavenging for survival, becoming victims as well as perpetrators of crime. They become a burden and nuisance to civil authorities who generally have little resources to cope with the overwhelming

After the Buzzer

Tim Antonides



Decision day

It's decision time for me again. That time of year when I have to decide if I'm going to play hockey for the next season, and if so in what league. The truth is, I'm a pretty lousy player. I didn't skate much when I was younger, so now I flop around on the ice like Bambi and hope that nobody notices. Of course, they do and I usually end up playing defense and getting skated around. The level of play is fairly high and I can't keep up.

My buddy John (now since defected to the east) has told me the same thing for years, "The only way you get better is to play in a good league like the one you're in. I know you won't keep up, but you'll learn so much." Learn, shmearn.

Tired of being the donkey

I've decided this year that I'm tired of being the donkey and being so blatantly useless, so I signed up in a league with half beginner and half intermediate players. I won't have the push of having to keep up with other guys, but at least I'll have fun and get to touch the puck. I've played with some of these guys before and a lot of them are struggling like me. Now I'll be able to skate around the occasional player and even score a few goals.

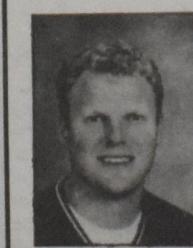
I've compromised. Settled. Lowered the bar. It feels like a relief and a defeat at the same time. The feeling of not measuring up is gone, replaced by the remorse of lowered personal expectations. It feels like I've done a fair bit of that in my life. I don't think I'm alone.

From my experience, many of us give up and lower our expectations of ourselves. It's too hard to face failure. So we set ourselves up for an easier time of things. For guaranteed success. It happens in so many areas. The young lady who, after a few failed relationships, finally settles for a husband who verbally abuses her (but at least he loves her). The bright student who gives up on a dream to become an architect because school's too hard and too much work. The parents who stop disciplining their kids and just become their buddies, because "it's not worth all the fighting." Many of us stop trying to grow and we take the easy road. It's too hard to keep up.

I know that my hockey example isn't exactly of profound importance. Plus I don't feel so bad about dropping the calibre of league I play in. It's a game; I'm there for fun, not for a big dose of personal growth. At the same time, it symbolizes a pattern I've created in my life — set yourself up for success, even if the success isn't that meaningful. A hard thing to break.

Often when I'm wallowing in a state of heightened self-confidence where I feel successful because I've expected little from myself, I'm suddenly reminded of the importance Christ placed on working wholeheartedly at our tasks. He wants His followers to be ever-faithful, to be diligent and industrious. It's convicting, even maddening. How can I do that? Does life have to be constantly difficult and challenging? It strikes me though that when Christ talked about the works we do, it was often in the context of gratitude. Thankfulness for His love and redemption should lead to us expecting the most from ourselves as His images. Maybe real change in our lives in this area should come less from guilt and more from joyful gratitude.

Sometimes that's hard for a Dutchman to do.



Tim Antonides taught Grade 8 and is a basketball coach at Surrey Christian School in Surrey, B.C.

numbers inundating their municipalities....

"Unfortunately, adoption is not a viable alternative in the future

for these children as there are simply too many of them."

Depression/Opinion

Happy anniversary?

... continued from page 14

It was such a mystery. How could all of it be true?

"You're thinking and reading too much," said Greta.

"Faith and believing can't be analyzed," said the pastor.

He had answered: "If God gives us a brain, shouldn't we use it? I have the right to analyze and make up my own mind."

He looks at the anniversary ad again. It talked about the Third Partner. Had there really been a Third Partner? Son Jake was a pastor, and this was pure pastor's talk.

"For in the day of trouble, he will keep me safe in his dwelling." That had been their wedding text. The domineer had repeated it several times, and each time he had felt the soft pressure of Greta's hand in his.

How could she have been so steadfast in her faith those 50 years? Why had God not granted such steadfastness to him? Eighty years old, and still a busy ants' nest of doubt, interspersed with some periods when he felt himself a child of God.

Greta pulls the walker toward him and tries to help him get up. He pushes her hands away. "I don't need help!"

"Ja, ja," hollers Greta, "Mijnheer — all his life wants to do things himself, nice hoor!"

Their granddaughter Cindy lives just out of town. "Horrors," she thinks, "that stoop has high steps." How would he manage that?

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But when they arrive, they are led into the backyard.

"Everything is set up in the backyard. Little Hankie is sleeping in the cradle, Opa, the one you made for me."

"Don't call him Hanky," he grumbles. "Sounds like a snortag."

Cindy laughs. "Opa, it's Hankie with 'ie' — the way you spell it in Dutch."

"Give him to me," he says, and makes a cradle with his good arm.

"Me first," says Greta.

"No, ma'am, he's named after me."

Cindy carefully lays the baby in the cradle of his arm.

As the women talk about the birth, he looks down on the red little face. How small — all these great-grandchildren are so tiny. This must be number 12, and they all look the same to him. He unfolds the little fingers to look at the tiny nails. The tiny hand suddenly grips his finger.

Hankie opens his eyes. They are small pools of peaceful water, deep as life itself.

Tears come unbidden to his own eyes, and the women fall silent. In the tiny fingers that cramp around his own, he feels the hand of God, who doesn't want to let him go.

For a while the two women say nothing, then Greta opens her purse and takes out a handkerchief. She gives it to him and gently takes the baby from his arm. When her face comes close to his, he whispers, "I'm ready."

She glances at him, a little puzzled, and smiles.

He looks past her up into the trees which break the sunlight into hundreds of bright pools of light. "I'm ready," he whispers again, and his fingers coil tightly around the handkerchief.

Herman de Jong is a retired teacher and furniture upholsterer who lives in Jordan, Ontario.

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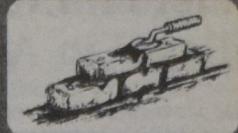
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Reflections on my first year at Knox

Building Trust

Vicky Van Andel Ed.



Herma Dunnewold

I have successfully completed year one of theological education towards a Master's of Divinity degree at Knox College in Toronto. It is a second career choice at a time when most people begin to think of retirement.

It was a year of letting go and mourning the old and of embracing and celebrating the new. It was a year of questioning interpretive methods, traditional doctrines and the absence of the female in that. It was a year of discovery and new knowledge of God and of self and of the many people who crossed my path. I was challenged to the limit by what was presented by professors and books, surprised by formerly unknown or unused gifts, and experienced a wonderful support network among those who studied with me.

There was a sense of seclusion being away from the world, behind the stone walls of classrooms and residence; away from all that had become familiar and secure: home, family, quiet country living, small-town Maritime closeness and generosity. As my life changed externally, with certain roles ending, something inside also changed. Perhaps it has to do with life changes that happen to every woman; perhaps it was a repressed and hidden dream that needed to see the light of day; perhaps it was facing my own mortality and realizing that there was so much I had not yet experienced.

Hiding behind securities

People speak to me of my courage and bravery. I have never considered myself having those qualities. As a child I feared everything and anything. I hid behind securities and sheltered myself from danger in every sense of the word. Risk was not a part of my life experience. Maybe it was just time I grew up in one sense and at the same time reclaim and regain youthful energy, wonder, irrepressible curiosity and play.

Many doors seemed to open during the year. As I struggled with the faith and doctrine of my youth and accepted new ways of looking at Scripture, I had a sense of a many-pieced puzzle strewn all over the floor. Where would I begin to put the pieces back together? There were pieces that are obvious — the corner pieces — I knew where they go, and the edges are identifiable. But the rest? That will take a life time!

That initial frustration led to a new sense of awe of the beauty of Scripture and of a God who cannot be confined to words written on a page in one era by one nation in one style or one interpretation. There was a renewed admiration of how these words, though not necessarily historical fact, are true in every age, for every nation, in any style and every interpretation.

Surprisingly, what became very urgent for me was to hear the voice of a woman speaking through the accepted and male-dominated world of Scripture, doctrine and philosophy. What difference does it make? I needed to know that there might be a reason why I was not always able to identify with the experiences and thought processes of the men who had become the great theologians and philosophers. I needed to know that another way besides the patriarchal model of the past might be better. I needed to know that feminist interpretive methods

are as valid as other methods. I needed to have affirmed that there is not one way to interpret the Scriptures and that any one way is never to be seen as the only right way. I came to an acknowledgement that there are differences — not better or worse than the other — but differences that complement one another.

Why is ordination necessary?

My major struggle, since perceiving a call to ministry has to do with ordination, church structure and tradition. With regard to ordination, I wondered why ordination is necessary. Why is it required that I be "set apart"? I don't feel set apart and wonder if Jesus was set apart in that way. Why has this office become so "holy" and why have the Sacraments become so sacred? How much of it is human institution and how much is God-directed? Is it a way that humans can control what is in, what is out, and who is in and who is out?

Church structure often becomes confining and an obstacle when the rule books become so thick that they detract from what the church is really about — the body of Christ gathered together in love. I realize we need order and decency, but what tends to happen over time is that one rule requires another one to interpret the first one or to close a loophole that develops. Rules have to change with the times to be relevant and cannot be cast in stone. Rigid church structure also invites hierarchies and levels of importance which do not exist in the unity of Christ's love.

Tradition, too, is vitally important. It provides comfort and security. It can also become inflexible and confining when the movement of the Spirit of God is stifled. The traditions we adhere to also began somewhere at some time and can be transformed and re-formed.

Face of the church must change

As a spiritual director of the Roman Catholic faith told me, you have to work from within. Leaving the church is not the answer and not the solution if you are frustrated or dissatisfied with the way things are. I do believe that as women's voices are heard and listened to, and their experiences are shared, the face of the church will change. It must change.

It is not my desire to knock down everything that is, but only to change it, to complete it. I do not wish to have the voices of men silenced or repressed or their experiences ignored. There has to be a dialogue between the "out there" and the "in here" differences; between the holy and the suffering; between power and submission; between the thunder and the whisper; between the head and the heart; the presence and the absence. These, and all the Scriptural paradoxes, need equal time, and all need to be heard.

Herma Dunnewold was raised in a Christian Reformed parsonage. She became a member of the Presbyterian Church when her local Christian Reformed Church in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, closed.

Anyone who would like to contribute to this column is invited to contact Vicky Van Andel via fax at 1-780-473-0970 or e-mail at: vanandel@oanet.com.

Opinion/News

Where is Jesus?

Tymen Hofman

When the Soviets successfully sent a cosmonaut into space and back, Nikita Khruschev boasted that they had gone there but could not find God. A flip retort would have been: How could you expect to see him since no one can see God. But while old Nikita's theology didn't quite get him to the top of the elevator, he wasn't firing blanks. He had someone else in mind, namely the man Jesus who is also God. In the light of Christian claims that Jesus went up into heaven, Nikita said, We looked and there was no one "up there."

Now I'm sure that many children would want to tell him he didn't look well enough, for Jesus is, indeed, "up there." When Jesus ascended, he went up into a cloud, and he will some day come back in the same way. While we adults are wise enough to know that Jesus isn't a space dweller until the day of his return, when it comes to giving a reasonable answer as to where Jesus is, we can't produce much in the way of a satisfactory response.

Going to the rest of Christendom doesn't help us much either. The Lutherans, at least, were troubled by the question and came up with the idea that, in the ascension, the humanity of Jesus took on some of the attributes of his godly nature so that his body became ubiquitous, that is, everywhere present where his divine nature is. But the Reformed saw that as essentially destroying the real humanity of Jesus and therefore rejected this teaching. As Reformed we simply say that Jesus in his human nature is in heaven, but we don't know where that is so we



LAURENTIAN LIBRARY, FLORENCE, ITALY (G. B. PINEIDER)
The Ascension — a watercolor on parchment by Rabula, a Syrian priest, from about 586 A.D.

don't really know where Jesus is either.

Heaven is a place

Now, for me to say that I know where Jesus is would be rank arrogance tinged with folly. On the other hand I am not satisfied with not knowing where Jesus is. He has to be somewhere in his flesh

and bones as the disciples saw him and ate fish with him. And I can't buy into any theory that makes him less physical than you and I are at this very moment, he and we together. So where do we go? Maybe we should speculate just a bit.

In our time we are beginning to see that when God banged the cosmos into being with power of

unthinkable magnitude and set the time clock running and history on its way, he brought forth a universe of unimaginable complexity, something scientists are beginning to discover. And he covered it all with the simple revelation: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." While that includes the starry heavens as well as our planet, the heavens should be seen to cover also heaven as the dwelling of the angels, and likely of the angels themselves. "The heavens" here referred to is part of God's original creation. It wasn't there before the creation event. Now it is this "place" where Jesus is.

Many dimensions

It is very significant that some of the best scientists now are saying that, in the first nanosecond, many things were brought forth that don't meet the scientific eye today. They believe there were dimensions in addition to the well-known quartet of time and the spatial dimensions of length and breadth and depth. They postulate a total of 11 dimensions while having no hard scientific evidence to support their theory. Very interesting! It might seem not so intellectually wild then to visualize heaven as another of God's created "dimensions" as well.

Obviously, this new dimension must be above the spacial dimensions with which we are familiar and to which we are limited. That means length, width and depth do not impinge on the unbounded "space" of heaven. Someone who is in heaven is in no way limited to our three dimensional view of things. Excelling our limitations, he can experience everything in the universe at the same time since he is in that "universalized" dimension. Therefore, Jesus, who is absent from us, is only absent to our ability to experience him; but, in his experience, he is totally with us. The fact that we cannot see him is only because the veil has been drawn so we cannot see beyond our present limitations in a three-dimensional world.

Into multi-dimensions

Do you want some evidence? Well, Jesus in his resurrection glory appeared instantaneously, in his physical body, in the upper room with his disciples. He didn't use the door, and didn't move through the walls like a ghost might, but just stood in their midst. And just as instantaneously he left them. In his resurrection power, he obviously could negotiate the dimensions of the whole created reality which included heaven. And Paul was once "caught up into

heaven," and there he saw things so glorious it was not lawful for him to reveal them. For that one glorious moment the veil was drawn away for Paul and he saw himself in the presence of Jesus.

In this light the Lord's ascending "up into a cloud" has symbolic meaning; being thus elevated is to be glorified. He didn't just keep on rising, endlessly. He was "translated," as were Moses and Elijah before him. The scriptural references to the ascension only report the fact but do not theologize to "explain" what happened.

Present with us

Now you might ask, What difference does this insight make on our view of where Jesus is? After all, we've always said that heaven is a place, and Jesus is in heaven. Yes, but the heaven we visualize has always been some faraway place, beyond the cloud somewhere, maybe beyond the universe. Seeing it that way, we make Jesus very distant. We live with the Heidelberg Catechism's explanation that Jesus is present with us "in his divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit" (Q. & A. 47) and with that we are led to conclude that in his humanity he is far from us. Seeing heaven as another dimension, and Jesus being able to over-ride our three dimensional world, brings him closer to me than my hands or my feet. To believe that the one to whom I belong, body and soul, in life and in death, is that close to me, always, is to live, always, in the presence of my brother who happens to be my Lord. Then nothing can separate us from the love of God because nothing can separate us from the real presence of King Jesus.

One more note — I believe heaven is the Seventh Dimension. After all, seven is the number of ultimate perfection. So it is fitting that we should so think of heaven and so identify it. Combine that with the familiar three, plus time as the fourth dimension. I have no idea what the fifth could be, if there is such, but the sixth, the number associated with the Antichrist, is undoubtedly a way to locate and identify the place called hell!

India's untouchables forgotten at Durban, more emphasis on Middle East problems

DURBAN, South Africa (ZENIT.org-Fides) — The World Conference Against Racism focused too much on Zionism and not enough on forms of racism such as the plight of India's 260 million "untouchables," a Catholic conferee said.

"The conference's sessions have become unbalanced around the Palestinian issue and the equating of racism and Zionism," said John Dayal, secretary-general of the All India Christian Council.

The United States and Israel pulled out of the conference after denouncing what they called anti-Israeli language in its draft declaration.

"The conference must not be destructive, but serve to create new

perspectives on discrimination and racial intolerance, at times perpetrated by governments themselves," Dayal told the Vatican agency Fides.

Not the voice of the poor

"We requested the dissolution of the Indian representation in Durban, because it is not the voice of the poor and the marginalized, of the minorities and the untouchables," he added. The untouchables are excluded by the present caste system from Indian society.

Dayal emphasized that "if the Durban conference has forgotten the discriminatory caste system, the greatest responsibility is that of the Indian delegation, expression

of a nationalist Hindu government that has betrayed the rights of minorities."

The All India Christian Council attended the Durban conference as a nongovernmental organization. Its presence served to continue the Church's work against the caste system.

The Vatican document presented at Durban, "The Church in Face of Racism," says that in "Africa and Asia there are still societies with a rigid caste division and social stratification that are difficult to overcome. ... [It is] not an exaggeration to say that, within some countries and ethnic groups, there are forms of social racism."



Ty Hofman is a retired minister of the Christian Reformed Church. He and his wife, Coby, live in Grand Rapids, Mich., which is as close to heaven as anyone can get.

News Comment

News for News



Bert Hielema

ON SEPTEMBER 11, WE discovered that, although the U.S. is still the mightiest nation on earth, a small band of fanatic men can strike the pride of America — marvels of contemporary construction and wonders of mechanical engineering — and cause them to burn and collapse.

We are in for a different world, where mighty armies offer no security. A few weeks ago I wrote in my column that "the next century — that is now — will not see large military conflicts which defined the Twentieth Century. Instead low-intensity conflicts, will, like cancer, affect the entire human race." To quote Martin van Crefeld, the author of *The Transformation of War*, again: "Who

can point to a society so isolated, so homogeneous, so rich, and so wallowing in contentment as to be in principle immune?" These prophetic words have come true. This is war — the 21st Century kind.

ALREADY IN THIS WAR there are winners and losers. The big losers are the FBI and the CIA in their failure to prevent this calamity. Closer to home, the real loser is John Doe, the ordinary citizen, you and I, because it will mean loss of freedom to move. It will mean closer scrutiny at the borders. It will mean even stricter controls when we fly. It will mean higher food costs, higher prices for plane tickets, perhaps drastically higher prices for oil if it is found

out that an oil state is directly involved. So, we all are the losers. Who is the winner in all this?

For the time being, the big winner is Israel. After what happened in New York, the U.S.A. can no longer argue that Israel should endure the suicide bombers. Israel now becomes, once again, the most important ally to the United States, because its secret services have been battling these very same radical elements for decades. This makes the U.S.A. dependent on the Israelis, whose intelligence capabilities in this area as well as their expertise in carrying out commando raids are clearly needed. The loser is Yasser Arafat who will have to drastically change his position and become more accommodating to Israel because the U.S.A. or Europe is no longer willing to support the Palestinian cause.

WHO ARE THE perpetrators of this cataclysmic event? Bin Laden. No doubt. Did he act alone? The sophistication required of communication and transport needed to put all these terrorists in place, goes beyond that available to Afghanistan. It can be safely assumed that Sudanese and Iraqi diplomatic communications and transport are both too closely watched to be useful. This leaves a number of states, all in the Middle East, all with a strong Islamic population and all oil producers. Oil will become the secret weapon here, and a strong deterrent to act against the will of Saudi Arabia, as America is at the mercy of the Middle East because it cannot function without the resources buried there. If the U.S.A. does act against the Spirit of OPEC, the price of oil will shoot up so high that our economy will simply refuse to function. The big loser will be the economy, and thus all of us. For that reason, I always watch the Dow, which I see it as a mirror of our financially obsessed society.

Thanks to my satellite TV, I have access to two business channels, and once at midday and once at 5 or so, take a peek at the stock exchanges.

You may have noticed in my columns that I am a bear, not a bull. My moderate investments are in fixed returns, so I have little riding on the equity market. Still, the ups and downs of the NYSE and the TSE are fascinating, and the comments of these financial wizards often hilarious because what they predict seldom pans out: on *Wall Street Week*, a popular PBS program, none of the 10 experts have correctly called a Dow downturn since mid-summer. In that sense they are a mirror of the CIA, whose prediction were equally

lacking in accuracy.

MY AMATEUR CALL IS that the financial market will fall further, of which we saw ample evidence these past weeks. After corporate cuts in spending, personal spending, too, will slow. The U.S. citizenry is in no mood to splurge anymore. Since WWII, recessions were caused by consumers buying less, making inventories grow, causing companies to scale back production and so provoking a recession. This time the order is different with more dire results.

This time, the slow-down started higher up on the economic ladder: companies, such as Nortel and JDS Uniphase, the so-called technological giants, grossly overestimated future demand, stopped buying and selling new equipment and pared their biggest fixed cost — wages — and thus workers.

Last year, at the peak of the boom, the value of all stocks reached 183 per cent of the American Gross Domestic Product, more than twice the level before the crash in 1929. All signs are that workers will start to tighten their belts and begin thinking of their outstanding bills. The average North American owes \$25,000 in credit cards, car loans and consumer credit, not including mortgage debt, which has never been higher and is still growing.

We North Americans were, until last week, an optimistic lot with a short memory. After a decade of abundance and half a century of growing prosperity, we have become used to more luxuries and have forgotten that debt can grow too large, that jobs may be at risk and that all booms not only precede busts; they also cause them.

Thus, every announcement of more layoffs moves us closer to this moment of truth. What you and I buy accounts for 66 per cent of the Gross National Product in North America. Once we stop eating out, stop buying luxury items, stop going on that vacation and, the greatest danger of all, start saving money and paying down debt, the real recession arises. And this economic downturn could last a long time because, for the first time ever, all three economic giants face trouble: Germany, Japan and the U.S.A.

So, I watch the stock market, full well knowing that it is an exaggerated barometer of the public mood, easily overshooting in pessimism and optimism. We have seen the plus side soar. Now it might turn the minus way.

I am a great believer in history. So I dug up an old volume by John Kenneth Galbraith written in 1954, called *The Great Crash 1929*. This Ontario-born Harvard professor

states that the causes of the Great Depression are still far from certain. Some people feel that after seven fat years, by biblical law of compensation, there would have to be seven bad ones. Galbraith discounts that — although I think it has merit. He believes that: "The most likely reason is that business concerns, in the characteristic enthusiasms of good times, misjudged the prospective increase in demand and acquired larger inventories than they later found they needed." That's exactly what has happened now, where the high level of capital investment suddenly stopped.

There are some other similarities: in 1929 there was a bad distribution of income, with five per cent of the population receiving about one-third of all personal income. Another parallel: in 1929 President Hoover announced a cut in taxes. Writes Galbraith: "The tax reductions were negligible except in the higher income tax brackets." Sounds eerily similar to what Bush has done. In 1929, Hoover slapped on high tariffs to discourage imports, which in turn caused a precipitate fall in exports." Today the high American dollar is doing the same to exports: Year in, year out, the United States has been allowed to consume more of the world's goods than it produces, the difference being defined as the trade deficit, running more than \$400 billion annually.

IN 1989, WHEN THE Berlin Wall fell, there was talk about a "Peace Dividend," as the dollars used to defeat the U.S.S.R. were freed to help the world at large. We know what happened: we spent it on ourselves. Except for Scandinavia and the Netherlands, all other countries decreased their foreign aid, even though we had 12 years of unprecedented prosperity. Now the tide may turn.

This war has only losers. It is a lose-lose situation but much more for us in the Western world than for the rest of the world, which has little to lose. This is, perhaps, an additional reason why all this was started. We, in the West have failed to see that the whole world, every member of the human race, is created in the image of God and must be treated with respect, awarded dignity and a share in our wealth. We have failed to spread the knowledge we have acquired. Now our multiple failures may be coming home, just as our failure to protect the environment may be backfiring on us.

Now more than ever we must practise to love God above all and our neighbor as ourselves.

Bert Hielema lives in Tweed, Ont.

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<p>Wedding</p> <p>HOF-KATERBERG: With joy and thanksgiving to the Lord, Roelof & Henny Hof of Arthur and William & Femmie Katerberg of Drayton are pleased to announce the wedding celebration of their children</p> <p>Willemien and Andrew</p> <p>The wedding will take place D.V. on Saturday, October 20, 2001 at 2:00 p.m. in the Christian Reformed Church, Drayton, Ont., Rev. Gary Bomhof and Dr. James Payton Jr. officiating.</p> <p>Mailing address: RR 2, Alma ON N0B 1A0</p>	<p>Anniversaries</p>  <p><i>Congratulations to Alice Matter on her 90th birthday.</i></p> <p>"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall lack nothing." (Psalm 23:1)</p> <p>We, the children of</p> <p>Alice Matter (nee de Boer) hope to celebrate Mom's 90th birthday. 1911 Oldemarkt, the Netherlands</p> <p>September 29, 2001 2001 Grimsby, Ont. Faye & Mike Tjoelker — Guelph, Ont. Richard & Jennifer Matter — Woodstock, Ont. Rose & Andrew Vanderlaan — Fergus, Ont. Luke & Henny Matter — Burlington, Ont. Bert & Teeny Matter — Guelph, Ont. and her 21 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. Her address: 12 Bartlett Ave., Shalom Manor Rm. 117, Grimsby ON L3M 4N5</p>	<p>Anniversaries</p> <p>1951 September 26 2001 With joy and thankfulness, we announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p>SAM and WIETSKA de WALLE (nee ten Cate) May God continue to keep you both in His care and love. With love from your family.</p> <p>Ed & Sarah de Walle — Terrace, B.C. Leah, Fraser, Alana, Jocelyn Frank & Anne de Walle — Lethbridge, Alta Samuel, Joanna, Allison Joanna & Ary Vreeken — Niger, Africa Peter, Joshua, Anna Home address: 314-3000 51 St. SW Calgary AB T3E 6S7</p>
<p>For Sale</p> <p>Near Bradenton, Florida: Wheelchair accessible Mobile Home, 45x12, large bedroom and drive-in shower, sliding doors to 22x10 screened cabana with vinyl windows. For details contact 613-549-6116 or e-mail: hadans@kos.net</p>	<p>Personal</p> <p>Christian man, mid 40s, would like to meet a Christian lady. Please send letters to File #2724 c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1</p>	<p>Obituary</p> <p>"The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1)</p> <p>On Monday, September 17, 2001, after a courageous battle with cancer JANNA DEN BOER (nee BAKKER) beloved wife of 50 years to Pieter den Boer of Midland, passed away at the age of 75 years.</p> <p>Dear mother of</p> <p>Aartje & Jean Sarrazin — Dalkeith, Ont.</p> <p>Patricia & Kenneth Burton — Sechelt, B.C.</p> <p>Loving grandmother of Jessica, Rebecca, Paul Andre, Sebastien, David, Ashley.</p> <p>Dear sister of Willemijn Bakker, Piennella & Jan Floris de Groot, Hendrika Bosman, Dania Bakker, Pieter Bakker, Daniel & Barbara Bakker, all of the Netherlands. Predeceased by brothers Hendrik, Willem, Jan and sisters Heitje and Geertje.</p> <p>Funeral was held on September 20, 2001, at Knox Presbyterian Church, Interlakes Lakeview Cemetery, Midland. Memorial donations to Gideon Bibles or Canadian Cancer Society would be appreciated.</p> <p>The family invites friends and relatives to sign Janna's book of visitation at www.obituariestoday.com</p>

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Obituary	Obituary	Job Opportunities
<p>JOHN EVER LuYMES went home to be with his Lord as the result of an automobile accident, on Sunday, September 16, 2001, in his 76th year. Beloved husband of Nel Luymes (nee Voskamp). Dear father of: Herman & Levina Luymes — Prince Edward Island Nelly & Len VanGeest — Waterloo John & Elaine Luymes — Moorefield Wilma & Bill Heideman — Baltimore Charles & Heather Luymes — Prince Edward Island Linda & Teo DeJong — Baltimore Carla & Bill Benning — Palmerston Brenda & Ray Heeres — Listowel Stan Luymes — Calgary David Luymes — Kitchener Steven Luymes — London Doug Luymes — Taiwan Loving Grandpa of Ben, Danielle & fiancée Tim, April, Leonna of P.E.I.; Dan, Jordana, Brian of Waterloo; Melisa, Jennifer, Mark, Robert of Moorefield; Randy & fiancée Tracy; Dennis, Julia, Tony of Baltimore; Carolyn, Rachel, Sonya, Leanne, Reuben of Baltimore; David, Lindsay, Tyler of Palmerston; Joel, Erica, Robyn, Natanya of Listowel; Amanda of Calgary. Brother of Johanna & Dirk Prinzen of Picton, Herman & Margaret Luymes of Trenton, Willie(+) & Fenny Luymes of Orillia. Brother-in-law of Len & Aleida Voskamp of Carrying Place, Gerda & Pete Verkuyl and Brian & Hetty Voskamp of Brighton, Dick & Emmy Voskamp, John & Janet Voskamp, Mike & Martha Voskamp, Harry & Suzanne Voskamp of Trenton. Fondly remembered by many nieces, nephews and friends. Predeceased by two brothers Hendrik and Gerrit in infancy. Funeral service was held at Palmerston Christian Reformed Church on September 20, 2001, Pastor Chris Schievink officiating. Interment Harriston Cemetery. As expressions of sympathy donations to the Back to God Hour would be appreciated by the family. Correspondence address: RR 1, Moorefield, ON N0G 2K0</p>	<p>On August 20, 2001, the Lord received into his kingdom GEORGE (GERRIT JAN) WITVOET beloved husband of: Henny Witvoet (nee Oldejans) fondly remembered by his children: Evan Witvoet Rhonda & Arnold VanderMeer Michael & Diane Witvoet Brian & Carla Witvoet Ian & Debbie Witvoet 11 grandchildren and his siblings: Lowell & Nell Witvoet Thelma & Tom Reitsma Bert & Alice (nee Oldejans) Witvoet Rini & Herman Koops Nell & Kees Vanturennot Fred & Anne Witvoet "Nothing will be able to separate him and us from the love of God, that is in Christ Jesus." (Romans 8:28-39) Correspondence: 468 Fernhill Blvd., Oshawa, ON L1J 5J7</p>	<p>YOUTH DIRECTOR position. Are you committed to the Lord Jesus Christ and the Reformed faith? Are you someone who is committed to the youth and who can enhance existing programs? Our Maranatha Church is looking for you. We have an opening for a half-time Youth Director. If you feel God is leading you in this direction send resume or inquiries in care of: Secretary of the Education Committee, Maranatha CRC, 2805 Hwy 2 East, Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K5. Fax: 905-623-6979. E-mail: maranathacrc@attcanada.net</p>
<p>Teachers</p>	<p>Teachers</p>	<p>Teachers</p>
<p>LACOMBE, ALTA.: Lacombe Christian School, approximately 379 students in K-9, located in central Alberta, invites applications from qualified teachers for a home room Grade 8/French position. This position is a maternity leave position starting in November. Applicants must qualify for Alberta Teacher Certification. Please send resume to: Martin Folkeerts, Principal Lacombe Christian School, 5206 58 Street, Lacombe, AB T4L 1G9. Phone: 403-782-6531, Fax: 403-782-5760.</p>	<p>BRAMPTON, ONT.: John Knox Christian School in Brampton, Ont. has a full-time vacancy in Grade 4 because of a pregnancy/parenting leave, beginning January 2002. Please direct inquiries and resumes to: Hilda Roukema, Principal 82 McLaughlin Rd. South, Brampton, ON L6Y 2C7 Phone: 905-451-3236, Fax: 905-451-3448 E-mail: hroukema@bramptonjkcs.org</p>	<p>Events</p>
<p>TABER, ALTA.: Taber Christian School TEACHING PRINCIPAL We are seeking a leader with a commitment to Jesus Christ for an interdenominational K-9 school with an enrolment of 130 students, beginning September 2002. Applicants should have a commitment for a reformed world life-view of Christian education and have administrative and team building abilities. If you would like to join our three-campus society in providing high-quality Christian education, please reply to Mrs. Marilyn Visser, 4809 60 Ave, Taber, AB T1G 1E9 or e-mail: principal@ta.monarch.net</p>	<p>Benefit Concert for DURHAM CHRISTIAN HOMES Inc. Featuring the Mattanah Male Choir and Organist André Knevel. Date: Friday, November 16, 2001 at 8 p.m. at Hebron Christian Reformed Church, Whitby. Proceeds to go to the new Community Centre for Durham Christian Homes Inc.</p>	<p><i>Consider placing a Personal Ad. \$16.00/column inch per insertion. One time set-up fee is \$35.00 for a box number. GST is extra..</i></p>

Job Opportunity

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Job Opportunities



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Candidates should be committed to teaching and pursuing scholarship from a reformed Christian perspective, and should possess the doctorate, or equivalent terminal degree, or be near the completion of requirements of such a degree. Interested candidates should submit a *curriculum vitae* with names and addresses of three references. *The deadline for application is October 31, 2001, or until the position is filled.*

Direct applications and inquiries to

Dr. Wytske van Dijk, Vice-President (Academic)
Redeemer University College
777 Garner Road East, Ancaster, ON L9K 1J4 Canada
vandijk@redeemer.on.ca

Redeemer University College offers equal employment opportunities to qualified applicants. In accordance with Canadian Immigration requirements, this advertisement is directed toward Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

NEW PART-TIME MUSIC COORDINATOR POSITION AVAILABLE

The First CRC of Chilliwack, on the eastern side of the scenic Fraser Valley in B.C., is in immediate need of a person to help us in our music ministries. We're looking for an active and spiritually mature person with the gifts, skills and desire to lead us in our music ministry. The successful applicant will have the desire to encourage and train our members with musical gifts in the use of those gifts for the praise of God. For a full position description or more information, please call us at 604-792-2517, fax us at 604-792-2538, or e-mail us at firstcrc@uniserve.com

Applications may be sent to:
Music Search Committee
9800 McNaught Rd. Chilliwack, BC V2P 6G2

Miscellaneous

Fruitland John Knox Memorial Christian School
invites you to celebrate their 40th anniversary with them, on

Saturday, October 20, 2001.

Open House, 795 Hwy #8, Fruitland, 2-4 p.m.
Dinner at Mountainview CRC, Grimsby at 5:30 p.m.

Limited seating. Tickets - \$20 each.

Reserve now by calling Diana, 905-643-2460
or Christina, 905-945-7513.

Evening program at 7:30 p.m. in Mountainview CRC.
Open to everyone.

Join us as we thank our Lord for the past 40 years.
Mail payment for dinner tickets to:

N.A.C.E.

795 Hwy #8, Fruitland ON L8E 5J3

Due to the anticipated retirement of its current Director, the *Christian Labour Association of Canada*, a trade union committed to justice in the workplace, is inviting persons with leadership skills to apply for the position of

- Executive Director -

The successful team leader will serve from the Union's Toronto office, and offer visionary leadership to a current team of 90 colleagues working out of six regional offices in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia.

Applicants must be able to articulate their Christian faith and world view and have experience in the promotion of Christian social action, preferably in labour relations. The person appointed must have organizational leadership experience, be a good communicator, with the ability to promote the mission and growth of the organization.

Please apply in writing before October 31, 2001 to:

Neil J. Roos, Chair, Leadership Search Committee

#100, 15483 104 Ave.

Surrey, BC V3R 1N9

E-Mail: surrey@clac.ca Fax: 604-583-6166

Web: www.clac.ca

The Board of Directors (BOD) of the Ontario Christian School Teachers' Association (OCSTA) invites applications for the position of

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The current Executive Director is retiring, D.V. as of July 31, 2002.

The Executive Director reports directly to the BOD but is expected to be the catalyst and prime mover for seven standing committees, associated agencies, related organizations, the OCSTA office and the seven hundred OCSTA members.

The BOD has determined that the OCSTA office will continue to be located in Ancaster, Ontario. The BOD has also determined that expectations of the current Executive Director exceed full-time and that some assistance is warranted for the position.

The BOD is interested in hearing from persons who have a proven reforming perspective of Christian education; who have a range of teaching/administrative training and experience in Christian schooling; who are articulate, motivated, visionary and self-starters.

You are cordially invited to discuss details with our current Executive Director, Hank Hultink, at 905-648-1200 or e-mail: ocsta@netcom.ca

Interested applicants should direct their data (C.V., including completed references from three sources) to:

OCSTA Executive Director Search Committee
777 Garner Road East, Ancaster, ON L9K 1J4

Applications for the position will be received until December 31, 2001. It is anticipated that the position will be awarded. D.V. by about mid February 2002.

Events/Advertising

Calendar of Events

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is \$7.50 per line, or \$1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion.

Oct. 6 Mountainview Concerts, Man of Praise, Mountainview CRC, Grimsby, Ont.
 Oct. 10 Organ Recital Sander v. Marion Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal, QC 12:30-1:30 p.m. 514-288-6421
 Oct. 12 Same Recital Central United Church, Moncton, N.B. 8 p.m. Info. 506-389-2811
 Oct. 13 Netherlands Bazaar, Community Centre, 7755 Bayview Ave., Thornhill, Ont. Market Place: crafts, etc. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Auction 7-10 p.m., Dutch Food delicacies 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. For info. call 905-878-1040
 Oct. 13 Chapel Singers, Mountainview CRC concerts, Grimsby, Ont.
 Oct. 13 Organ Recital Sander v. Marion St. Mathews United Church, Halifax, N.S. 7:30 p.m. 902-423-9209
 Oct. 17 Same Recital Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa, Ont. 8 p.m. Info. 613-224-1597
 Oct. 18 Same Recital St. Peter's Anglican Church, Brockville, Ont. Info. 613-224-1597
 Oct. 19 Same Recital Trinity St. Andrew's United Church, Renfrew, Ont. Info. 613-224-1597
 Oct. 20 Liberation Choir, Hamilton, Ont. 8 p.m., Christ's Church Cathedral, 252 James St. N.
 Oct. 20 A Day of Encouragement. Training for deacons, elders, caregivers and outreach ministry planners at Hamilton District Chr. High School, Ancaster, Ont. Theme Open Doors, featuring 50 workshops. See ad.
 Oct. 26 Repeat Performance on VISION TV, celebration at Hamilton Place of 25th Anniversary Canadian Christian Education Foundation; 1000 voice student choir etc., 9 p.m. ET; 6 p.m. PT. See ad in this issue.
 Oct. 26 Concert Organ André Knevel, Sander Van Marion, Mountainview CRC, Grimsby, Ont. 8 p.m.
 Nov. 2 Christian Festival Concert, direction Leendert Kooij, Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto. Call 416-636-9779
 Nov. 6 2001 Annual Church & Law Seminar, Bramalea Baptist Church, Bramalea located in Greater Toronto. Theme: "Ten Hot Topics for Churches and Religious Charities". Registration forms at www.charitylaw.ca and the host, Carter & Associates, 519-942-0001, fax: 519-942-0300; e-mail: seminars@charitylaw.ca
 Nov. 9 Concert Clinton CRC, 7:30 p.m. Laurens Kaldeway, organ; Blyth Fest. Orchestra; Ron Greidanus, piano; Men of Note. Call 519-482-5372
 Nov. 10 The Lighthouse Christian Community Centre Annual International Dinner and Silent Auction, at Buffet King, 401 & Warden, Scarborough, Ont. Call the Lighthouse at 416-535-6262 for reservations.
 Nov. 16 Benefit Concert Durham Christian Homes, Hebron CRC, Whitby, Ont. See ad in classifieds.
 Nov. 23 Liberation Choir, Orangeville, Ont. 8 p.m., Orangeville Can. Ref. Church, 55 C-Line.
 Nov. 24 Liberation Choir, London, Ont. 8 p.m., St. Paul's Cathedral, 472 Richmond St.
 Nov. 24-25 Information for all Liberation Choir concerts: 905-457-2348
 Dec. 8 Mountainview concert, Grimsby. André Knevel, organ, flute, Stephanie Scholman, violin, Hosanna Choir.
 Dec. 15 Can. Chr. Education Foundation. Repeat performance VISION TV broadcasting. See ad in this issue.
 April 21, 2002 Calgary 1st CRC 50th Anniv. Former members welcome. For info. 403-243-2244 celebr8fifty@aol.com

Clean Air Tip...

(NC)—Combining several errands into one trip results in less fuel consumption and fewer emissions of car-generated pollution.

- News Canada



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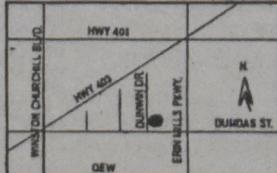
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 REPEAT PERFORMANCE TO BE BROADCAST ACROSS CANADA ON

Friday, October 26/2001 - 9:00 pm ET / 6:00 pm PT
Saturday, December 15/2001 - 9:00 pm ET / 6:00 pm PT

for further information contact our Executive Director Fred R. VanderVelde
Canadian Christian Education Foundation Inc.
 2621 Cavendish Drive, Burlington, ON L7P 3W6 Tel: 905-336-5619 • Fax: 905-336-2376

ORGAN-PIANO CONCERT

André Knevel
Sander Van Marion

An opportunity to hear these great organists
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2001. 8:00 P.M.

MOUNTAINVIEW CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

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Admission \$10.00 p.p.



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10 AM - 10 PM

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- Auction
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- Herring
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- Pea Soup and other Dutch Treats

ADMISSION FREE

Market Place: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
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News

The remarkable feeding of the 110

Jacky Huberts

CHILLIWACK, B.C. — They walk into a large room with little white lights strung around the walls, a balcony full of clothes for those who need it, and a kitchen that has food for low prices. "The Bridge people," as they are affectionately called, come in from the rain and have a hot cup of soup and sip their coffee as they play cards, pool or just sit around various tables and talk with one another. There is a true sense of community in this place, which is instantly felt as you walk into the room. The volunteers are warmly welcoming everyone, whether new or a regular.

Place of refuge and quiet

"The Bridge" is a Christian drop-in centre located in Chilliwack, B.C. Its vision is to serve and share the gospel with the less fortunate. It's a place of refuge and quiet in an atmosphere of Christian character. It began when Ralph Wierenga, a missionary from China, spoke to the congregation of Chilliwack Christian Reformed Church. One of its members, Ted Stoker, was listening.

"I went out of curiosity to see what was happening," Ted says, "and I've been involved ever since." Wierenga spoke about his work with street people and his message spoke to the hearts of Ted Stoker and his wife Ann. They and



Ted and Ann Stoker, who helped start "The Bridge."

a few others from various churches in the area began to meet once a month to see where God would lead them.

"The Bridge" began on March 12, 1998 and since then it has seen up to 160 people in one evening come to get shelter, eat a meal and enjoy the company of others.

The name for their ministry came in an unusual way. "Most of the time when an organization tries to come up with a name (they) come up with a name first (and

then the logo). We sort of went backwards. Ralph (Wierenga) drew a logo on the back of a napkin in a restaurant and had no idea what he was doing, Ted explains. The logo has a bridge between a city and the cross of Jesus Christ. The building is not made of usual brick or wood, but of people. The bridge is leaning towards the church as Christians are helping those in need to come to Christ. Three years later, "The Bridge" is a thriving drop-in centre with a heart to serve the community.

Impossible task?

The vision of serving the outside community came to expression in a remarkable way in August of this year. "The Bridge" heard news one night of the tragic death of one of their security guards, Gregory Ypma. The night they were told was for them an extremely difficult one. But, in the midst of that difficulty, a true spirit of community and love emerged.

Ann Stoker explains what happened that night, "Wanda, one of the girls in the kitchen got a mustard container and she said, 'Well, we've got to do something' so she started collecting money. She collected just a little under a hundred and fifty dollars." Ann rounded it off to a hundred and fifty.

The next morning, Ann woke up with an idea and knew that it was something that God wanted her to do. "They [Gregory's extended family] have to get together; they all have to eat together." The intention of her remark was that "The Bridge" should make that possible. This seemed like an impossible task at first. Even her husband Ted

doubted that organizing an event like this would be possible. Not only would two days be insufficient to plan a dinner for 110 people, but where would the money come from and where would it be held?

Amazing provision

Ann called her friend Dinah and they discussed the dinner and how they could make it possible. Ann then discovered that the Christian school in the area had offered the family their gym for 24 hours so that they would be able to all meet in one place. "That's perfect," Ann thought.

With the money that was collected, The Bridge people bought a shrub to be planted in the Ypmas' yard, a plaque, and two sympathy cards. Dinah then ordered the food for the dinner through a local bakery, grocer, and meat shop with the remaining money. When Ann and Dinah went to pick up the items they were blessed with the support of these local businesses. "Dinah paid very little for the buns, salad items and potatoes, and, when she walked into the meat shop, they said 'No charge.'"

Ted and Ann placed the remaining money into an envelope and took it with them to the dinner. At the dinner, Ted asked Gregory's father Willy, if he had someone to pray for the meal. Willy asked Ted if he would pray, and Ted used the opportunity to tell the family that the expense of the meal had been picked up by "The Bridge" people. As Ann and Ted were speaking with the family after the meal, they both felt tugs at their pockets and money being put in their hands.

"We took this money, added it to the money that was in the envelope, and, without rounding it off, it came back to exactly a hundred and fifty dollars. So technically we fed a hundred and ten people for nothing."

Ted and Ann compare their story of Jesus feeding the five thousand. In Mark 6, Jesus uses five loaves and two fish from a young boy to feed the crowd that followed him. Just as the young boy was an ordinary person used by God, so are The Bridge people.

What had begun as an act of faith had become the most incredible blessing to everyone involved. Ted and Ann were both astonished. Ann admits that for her this was an act of faith that was hard to believe in at first, "Usually I worry about things, but a calmness came over me."

"The Bridge" has a unique ministry, Ted explains. "We're not bringing them to a building, we're bringing them to God."

News Digest

Film portrays Jesus as 'Boss'

TOKYO (Religion Today) — The tiny, flashy church east of Tokyo is the headquarters of one-time yakuza (Japanese mafia) gangster, Rev. Hiroyuki Suzuki, 46, who worships there with seven of his ex-mobster friends, also converted to Christianity and now model citizens. These eight are the founders of the Barabbas Mission, named after the thief pardoned by Pontius Pilate in place of Christ. Their switch from crime to Christianity is told in the new film, *Oyabun-wa Jesu-sama*, translated as *Jesus is my Boss*.

Evidence of Suzuki's past includes the intricate tattoos, covered by long shirt-sleeves and three of his fingers which have missing joints, amputated in the yakuza tradition to pay penance for mistakes. "The film shows how difficult it is to leave the world of the yakuza ... It conveys the complexity of that environment, how it can be changed through love," he said.

Suzuki recalled how once "I was on the run in Tokyo. I had left my wife and child and had fallen into a life of debauchery, drugs and alcohol, but never any relief ... I sought refuge in a church and I learned the words of God. I went back to my wife who forgave me, and persuaded me to enter a seminary."

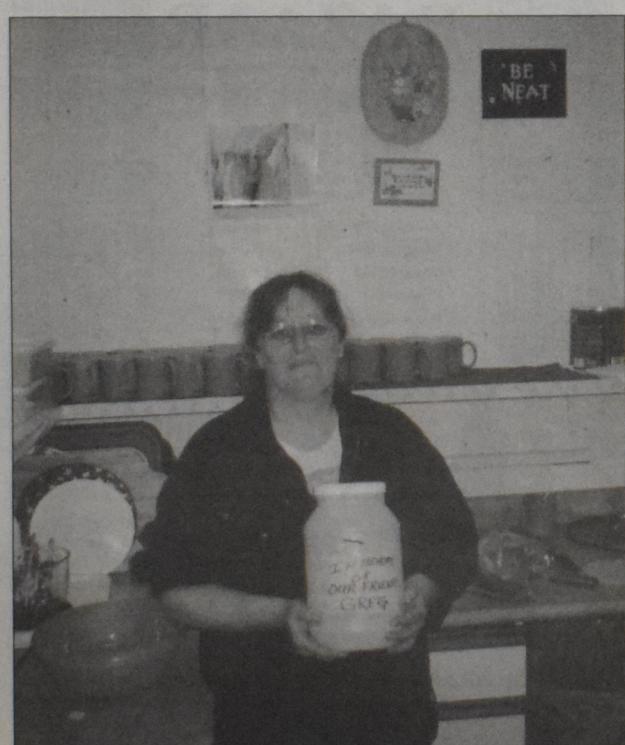
Sunless solar meters

LONDON, England — Newly installed solar-powered parking meters have fallen victim to Britain's notoriously gloomy weather, allowing hundreds of motorists to escape paying for tickets, reports Reuters.

City officials in Nottingham spent the equivalent of \$2.25 million on 215 high-tech meters earlier this year, after studies showed that towns in sun-drenched Mediterranean countries had saved a fortune in maintenance costs. Despite better than average sunshine in August, more than a quarter of the machines have stopped working, and council hopes to have them fixed in time for winter.

Fast as molasses

BOSTON — Who says molasses is slow? In 1919, a 2.5 million gallon tank of molasses exploded in Boston, sending an 1.5 metre wave of the sticky stuff racing through the city at speeds of up to 56 km per hour. Dozens of people were injured, reports the *Los Angeles Times*.



Wanda, a kitchen staff worker for "The Bridge."